

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2015-2101-HCM
ENV-2015-2102-CE

HEARING DATE: June 18, 2015
TIME: 10:30 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: 2801 N Vermont Canyon
Council District: 4
Community Plan Area: Hollywood
Area Planning Commission: Central
Neighborhood Councils: Hollywood United and
Los Feliz
Legal Description: TR Rancho Los Felis, Lot 38

PROJECT: Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the
DANTE'S VIEW

REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

OWNER(S): City of Los Angeles
Recreation & Parks
P.O. Box 86328
Los Angeles, CA 90086

APPLICANT: City of Los Angeles
Department of City Planning
200 N. Spring Street Rm. 559
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RECOMMENDATION **That the Cultural Heritage Commission:**

1. **Declare the subject property** a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.7.
2. **Adopt** the staff report and findings.

MICHAEL J. LOGRANDE
Director of Planning

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Ken Bernstein, AICP, Manager
Office of Historic Resources

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Lambert M. Giessinger, Preservation Architect
Office of Historic Resources

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Shannon Ryan, City Planning Associate
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: Historic-Cultural Monument Application

FINDINGS

- Dante's View "reflects the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, state or community" as a unique example of a cultural landscape created and maintained by a private individual within a public facility.

CRITERIA

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon) building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, State or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, State or local history or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his age.

SUMMARY

Dante's View is a two-acre site in Griffith Park, a large municipal park at the eastern end of the Santa Monica Mountains. Dante's View is located due east of Mount Hollywood along the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail. Circa 1964, Brazilian immigrant of Italian descent Dante Orgolini terraced and converted this section of the park into a folk garden. He removed the typical Southern California mountain chaparral, terraced the land, added winding paths, and new plantings. Not only did he create a garden, but a scenic vista showcasing the Los Angeles basin from the skyline of downtown to the Pacific Ocean.

Orgolini created the garden with the help of park rangers and other hikers. They brought in plants to landscape the site and created low retaining walls and planters made from rock. Plant specimens included pine, palm, and pepper trees. Dante Orgolini maintained the garden as a volunteer from 1964 until his death in 1978. A plaque exists in the park commemorating Orgolini's contribution. It reads "From the many friends of Dante Orgolini, 1905-1978, honoring the memory of the man who created this garden for you and me." After Orgolini's death, volunteer Charlie Turner maintained the garden until 1997.

The original plantings from the 1960s were lost in a 1990 fire. Another fire in 2007 subsequently burned the re-plantings after the 1990 fire. The garden includes picnic tables and benches.

DISCUSSION

Dante's View successfully meets one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: "reflects the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, state or community." Dante's View has been a treasured gathering place within Griffith Park for over 51 years. It is a unique example of a cultural landscape created and maintained by a private individual within a public facility. Though the original plantings of Dante's View were lost to fire in 1990 and 2007, the original 1964 meandering paths, rock retaining walls, and rock planters remain. The garden maintains its original location, layout, and fire-resistant materials from 1964. The garden also retains its association with Dante Orgolini, having been referred to as Dante's View for many decades.

Dante's View is the second of three established volunteer gardens in Griffith Park. The first is Captain's Roost which was created in the mid-1940s. Little information is available on its beginnings. In 1971, Amir Dialameh established the third volunteer-tended garden called Amir's Garden. Dante's View is part of the legacy of volunteer created folk gardens in Griffith Park.

While included within the boundaries of the Griffith Park Historic-Cultural Monument (#942), Dante's View was not identified as a contributing element because it was created after the Period of Significance (1896-1957). Declaring Dante's View a Historic-Cultural Monument would recognize a significant cultural landscape within the park, the later period of Griffith Park's development, and the contributions of Dante Orgolini to the park.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT ("CEQA") FINDINGS

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 *"consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment."*

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 *"consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings."*

The designation of Dante's View as a Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 1, of The City of Los Angeles Administrative Code ("LAAC") will ensure that future construction activities involving the subject property are regulated in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to a Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC. Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of an irreplaceable historic site/open space. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 31 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals relating to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of historic buildings and sites in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2015-2102-CE was prepared on June 3, 2015.

BACKGROUND

On November 4, 2014 Councilmember Tom LaBonge moved to initiate consideration of Dante's View as a Historic-Cultural Monument. On May 19, 2015 the City Council approved initiation of the proposed Monument instructing the Department of City Planning to prepare a report and Historic-Cultural Monument application for Dante's View and requesting that the application be heard by the Cultural Heritage Commission. On June 18, 2015, a subcommittee of the Commission consisting of Commissioners Milofsky and Scrafano toured the property, accompanied by a staff member from the Office of Historic Resources.



HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION FORM

1. PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

Proposed Monument Name:					
Other Associated Names:					
Street Address:				Zip:	Council District:
Range of Addresses on Property:				Community Name:	
Assessor Parcel Number:	Tract:			Block:	Lot:
Identification cont'd:					
Proposed Monument Property Type:	Building	Structure	Object	Site/Open Space	Natural Feature
Describe any additional resources located on the property to be included in the nomination, here:					

2. CONSTRUCTION HISTORY & CURRENT STATUS

Year built:	Factual	Estimated	Threatened?		
Architect/Designer:			Contractor:		
Original Use:			Present Use:		
Is the Proposed Monument on its Original Site?		Yes	No (explain in section 7)	Unknown (explain in section 7)	

3. STYLE & MATERIALS

Architectural Style:		Stories:	Plan Shape:
<i>FEATURE</i>	<i>PRIMARY</i>	<i>SECONDARY</i>	
CONSTRUCTION	Type:	Type:	
CLADDING	Material:	Material:	
ROOF	Type:	Type:	
	Material:	Material:	
WINDOWS	Type:	Type:	
	Material:	Material:	
ENTRY	Style:	Style:	
DOOR	Type:	Type:	



HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION FORM

4. ALTERATION HISTORY

List date and write a brief description of any major alterations or additions. This section may also be completed on a separate document. Include copies of permits in the nomination packet. Make sure to list any major alterations for which there are no permits, as well.

5. EXISTING HISTORIC RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION (if known)

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places	
Listed in the California Register of Historical Resources	
Formally determined eligible for the National and/or California Registers	
Located in an Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)	Contributing feature Non-contributing feature
Determined eligible for national, state, or local landmark status by an historic resources survey(s)	Survey Name(s):
Other historical or cultural resource designations:	

6. APPLICABLE HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT CRITERIA

The proposed monument exemplifies the following Cultural Heritage Ordinance Criteria (Section 22.171.7):
Reflects the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community
Is identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, state, or local history
Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type specimen, inherently valuable for study of a period, style, or method of construction
A notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age



HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION FORM

7. WRITTEN STATEMENTS

This section allows you to discuss at length the significance of the proposed monument and why it should be designated an Historic-Cultural Monument. Type your response on separate documents and attach them to this form.

A. Proposed Monument Description - Describe the proposed monument's physical characteristics and relationship to its surrounding environment. Expand on sections 2 and 3 with a more detailed description of the site. Expand on section 4 and discuss the construction/alteration history in detail if that is necessary to explain the proposed monument's current form. Identify and describe any character-defining elements, structures, interior spaces, or landscape features.

B. Statement of Significance - Address the proposed monument's historic, cultural, and/or architectural significance by discussing how it satisfies the HCM criteria you selected in Section 6. You must support your argument with substantial evidence and analysis. The Statement of Significance is your main argument for designation so it is important to substantiate any claims you make with supporting documentation and research.

8. CONTACT INFORMATION

Applicant

Name:		Company:	
Street Address:		City:	State:
Zip:	Phone Number:	Email:	

Property Owner

Is the owner in support of the nomination?

Yes

No

Unknown

Name:		Company:	
Street Address:		City:	State:
Zip:	Phone Number:	Email:	

Nomination Preparer/Applicant's Representative

Name:		Company:	
Street Address:		City:	State:
Zip:	Phone Number:	Email:	

HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION FORM



9. SUBMITTAL

When you have completed preparing your nomination, compile all materials in the order specified below. Although the entire packet must not exceed 100 pages, you may send additional material on a CD or flash drive.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Nomination Form | 5. Copies of Primary/Secondary Documentation |
| 2. Written Statements A and B | 6. Copies of Building Permits for Major Alterations (include first construction permits) |
| 3. Bibliography | 7. Additional, Contemporary Photos |
| 4. Two Primary Photos of Exterior/Main Facade (8x10, the main photo of the proposed monument. Also email a digital copy of the main photo to: planning.ohr@lacity.org) | 8. Historical Photos |
| | 9. Zimas Parcel Report for all Nominated Parcels (including map) |

10. RELEASE

Please read each statement and check the corresponding boxes to indicate that you agree with the statement, then sign below in the provided space. Either the applicant or preparer may sign.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I acknowledge that all documents submitted will become public records under the California Public Records Act, and understand that the documents will be made available upon request to members of the public for inspection and copying.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I acknowledge that all photographs and images submitted as part of this application will become the property of the City of Los Angeles, and understand that permission is granted for use of the photographs and images by the City without any expectation of compensation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I acknowledge that I have the right to submit or have obtained the appropriate permission to submit all information contained in this application.

Shannon Ryan

6/3/15

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Name:

Date:

Signature:

Mail your Historic-Cultural Monument Submittal to the Office of Historic Resources.

Office of Historic Resources
Department of City Planning
200 N. Spring Street, Room 620
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 213-978-1200
Website: preservation.lacity.org

DANTE'S VIEW IN GRIFFITH PARK HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION CONTINUATION SHEET

A. Description of Site

Dante's View is a two-acre site in Griffith Park, a large municipal park at the eastern end of the Santa Monica Mountains. Dante's View is located due east of Mount Hollywood along the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail. Circa 1964, Brazilian immigrant of Italian descent Dante Orgolini terraced and converted this section of the park into a folk garden. He removed the typical Southern California mountain chaparral, terraced the land, added winding paths, and new plantings. Not only did he create a garden, but a scenic vista showcasing the Los Angeles basin from the skyline of downtown to the Pacific Ocean.

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The original plantings from the 1960s were lost in a 1990 fire. Another fire in 2007 subsequently burned the re-plantings after the 1990 fire. The garden includes picnic tables and benches.

B. Statement of Significance

Per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.7, Dante's View is eligible for designation as a Historic-Cultural Monument under criteria one, "reflects the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community."

Dante's View has been a treasured gathering place within Griffith Park for over 51 years. It is a unique example of a cultural landscape created and maintained by a private individual within a public facility. Though the original plantings of Dante's View were lost to fire in 1990 and 2007, the original 1964 meandering paths, rock retaining walls, and rock planters remain. The garden maintains its original location, layout, and fire-resistant materials from 1964. The garden also retains its association with Dante Orgolini, having been referred to as Dante's View for many decades.

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Bibliography

"Griffith Park Historic-Cultural Monument Application." April 19, 2008. *ICF Jones & Stokes*: Daniel Paul, Meghan Potter, Elizabeth Weaver; Project Manager: Christopher J. Hetzel; with Contributions By Dr. Michael Eberts.

Dean, Paul. "The Lessons of Orgolini's City Garden." *Los Angeles Times*, December 20, 1986. Web. 3 June 2015. http://articles.latimes.com/print/1986-12-20/news/vw-4190_1_charlie-turner

Lichtblau, Charlie. "Charlie Turner; Griffith Garden Caretaker." *Los Angeles Times*, February 2, 1997. Web. 3 June 2015. http://articles.latimes.com/1997-02-02/local/me-24797_1_charlie-turner

McKinney, John. "Griffith Park: Mt. Hollywood from Griffith Observatory." *The Trailmaster*, August 9, 2013. Web. 3 June 2015. <http://www.thetrailmaster.com/hikes/california-hikes/griffith-park-mt-hollywood/>

McKinney, John. "Hike the World, Stay at Home: Thanks to Southern California's Richly Diverse Terrain, You Don't Have to Walk Far to Imagine Yourself in a Foreign Country." *Los Angeles Times*, June 10, 1990. Web. 3 June 2015. http://articles.latimes.com/1990-06-10/travel/tr-38_1_southern-california-hiked

Rivas, Luis. "Griffith Park Garden Named Cultural Monument." *Park LaBrea News Beverly Press*, May 21, 2015. Web. 3 June 2015. <http://beverlypress.com/2015/05/griffith-park-garden-named-cultural-monument/>

COUNTY CLERK'S USE

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CITY CLERK'S USE

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
200 NORTH SPRING STREET, ROOM 360
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

(California Environmental Quality Act Section 15062)

Filing of this form is optional. If filed, the form shall be filed with the County Clerk, 12400 E. Imperial Highway, Norwalk, CA 90650, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152 (b). Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21167 (d), the filing of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project. Failure to file this notice with the County Clerk results in the statute of limitations being extended to 180 days.

LEAD CITY AGENCY City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning	COUNCIL DISTRICT 4
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PROJECT TITLE * Dante's View Historic-Cultural Monument	LOG REFERENCE ENV-2015-2102-CE CHC-2015-2101-HCM
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PROJECT LOCATION
* 2801 Vermont Canyon Road, Los Angeles, CA 90027 (North coordinate: 34°07'45.77" W coordinate: 118°17'54.14")

DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT:
* Designation of Dante's View as a Historic-Cultural Monument.

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT, IF OTHER THAN LEAD CITY AGENCY:
*

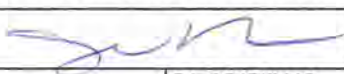
CONTACT PERSON * Shannon Ryan	AREA CODE * 213	TELEPHONE NUMBER * 978-1192	EXT.
----------------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------	------

EXEMPT STATUS: (Check One)

	STATE CEQA GUIDELINES	CITY CEQA GUIDELINES
<input type="checkbox"/> MINISTERIAL	Sec. 15268	Art. II, Sec. 2b
<input type="checkbox"/> DECLARED EMERGENCY	Sec. 15269	Art. II, Sec. 2a (1)
<input type="checkbox"/> EMERGENCY PROJECT	Sec. 15269 (b) & (c)	Art. II, Sec. 2a (2) & (3)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION	Sec. 15300 et seq.	Art. III, Sec. 1
Class <u>8 & 31</u> Category _____ (City CEQA Guidelines)		
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (See Public Resources Code Sec. 21080 (b) and set forth state and City guideline provision.		

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION: Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 of the State's Guidelines applies to where project's consists of "actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment." Class 31 applies "to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings." Designation of Dante's View as a Historic-Cultural Monument will assure the protection of the environment by the enactment of project review regulations based on the Secretary of Interior's Standards to maintain and preserve the historic site.

IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT ISSUED BY THE CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT STATING THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS FOUND THE PROJECT TO BE EXEMPT.

SIGNATURE 	TITLE City Planning Associate	DATE 6/3/15
FEE:	RECEIPT NO.	REC'D. BY
		DATE

DISTRIBUTION: (1) County Clerk, (2) City Clerk, (3) Agency Record

IF FILED BY THE APPLICANT:

*
NAME (PRINTED)

*
SIGNATURE

*
DATE



City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning

6/3/2015

PARCEL PROFILE REPORT

PROPERTY ADDRESSES

2801 N VERMONT CANYON ROAD

ZIP CODES

90027

RECENT ACTIVITY

None

CASE NUMBERS

CPC-24196

CPC-1990-596-GPC

CPC-1990-496-GPC

CPC-1986-831-GPC

ORD-171177-SA131

ORD-169419-SA131

ORD-164713

ZA-2006-10405-ZV

ZA-1999-828-ZAI

ZA-1993-570-ZAI

ZA-1993-1041-ZAI

ZA-1983-424

YV-3813

CHC-2008-2724-HCM

ENV-2006-10406-CE

MND-98-4-CUB

CFG-1500

Address/Legal Information

PIN Number	156B197 1
Lot/Parcel Area (Calculated)	26,431,813.2 (sq ft)
Thomas Brothers Grid	PAGE 563 - GRID H6
	PAGE 563 - GRID H7
	PAGE 563 - GRID J6
	PAGE 563 - GRID J7
	PAGE 564 - GRID A7
	PAGE 593 - GRID H1
	PAGE 593 - GRID J1
	PAGE 594 - GRID A1
Assessor Parcel No. (APN)	5593002912
Tract	RANCHO LOS FELIS
Map Reference	PAT 1-163/164
Block	None
Lot	PT LT NO 38
Arb (Lot Cut Reference)	48
Map Sheet	156B193
	156B197
	159B193
	159B197

Jurisdictional Information

Community Plan Area	Hollywood
Area Planning Commission	Central
Neighborhood Council	Hollywood United
	Los Feliz
Council District	CD 4 - Tom LaBonge
Census Tract #	9800.09
LADBS District Office	Los Angeles Metro

Planning and Zoning Information

Special Notes	None
Zoning	OS-1XL
Zoning Information (ZI)	ZI-208
General Plan Land Use	Open Space
General Plan Footnote(s)	Yes
Hillside Area (Zoning Code)	Yes
Baseline Hillside Ordinance	No
Baseline Mansionization Ordinance	No
Specific Plan Area	None
Special Land Use / Zoning	None
Design Review Board	No
Historic Preservation Review	Yes
Historic Preservation Overlay Zone	None
Other Historic Designations	None
Other Historic Survey Information	None
Mills Act Contract	None
POD - Pedestrian Oriented Districts	None

This report is subject to the terms and conditions as set forth on the website. For more details, please refer to the terms and conditions at zimas.lacity.org
(*) - APN Area is provided "as is" from the Los Angeles County's Public Works, Flood Control, Benefit Assessment.

CDO - Community Design Overlay	None
NSO - Neighborhood Stabilization Overlay	No
Streetscape	No
Sign District	No
Adaptive Reuse Incentive Area	None
CRA - Community Redevelopment Agency	None
Central City Parking	No
Downtown Parking	No
Building Line	None
500 Ft School Zone	No
500 Ft Park Zone	Active: Roosevelt Golf Course Active: Griffith Park Active: Griffith Observatory

Assessor Information

Assessor Parcel No. (APN)	5593002912
Ownership (Assessor)	
Owner1	L A CITY C/O REAL EST BUS GROUP - JUNE
Address	0 PO BOX 51111 LOS ANGELES CA 90051
Ownership (City Clerk)	
Owner	Not Available
Address	Not Available
APN Area (Co. Public Works)*	640.000 (ac)
Use Code	8800 - Government Owned
Assessed Land Val.	\$4,098,922
Assessed Improvement Val.	\$0
Last Owner Change	02/45/67
Last Sale Amount	\$0
Tax Rate Area	13
Deed Ref No. (City Clerk)	None
Building 1	No data for building 1
Building 2	No data for building 2
Building 3	No data for building 3
Building 4	No data for building 4
Building 5	No data for building 5

Additional Information

Airport Hazard	None
Coastal Zone	None
Farmland	Area Not Mapped
Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone	Yes
Fire District No. 1	No
Flood Zone	A D=N/A E=N/A IN
Watercourse	No
Hazardous Waste / Border Zone Properties	No
Methane Hazard Site	None
High Wind Velocity Areas	No
Special Grading Area (BOE Basic Grid Map A-13372)	Yes
Oil Wells	None

Seismic Hazards

Active Fault Near-Source Zone	
Nearest Fault (Distance in km)	Within Fault Zone
Nearest Fault (Name)	Hollywood Fault
Region	Transverse Ranges and Los Angeles Basin
Fault Type	B
Slip Rate (mm/year)	1.00000000

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 (*) - APN Area is provided "as is" from the Los Angeles County's Public Works, Flood Control, Benefit Assessment.

Slip Geometry	Left Lateral - Reverse - Oblique
Slip Type	Poorly Constrained
Down Dip Width (km)	14.00000000
Rupture Top	0.00000000
Rupture Bottom	13.00000000
Dip Angle (degrees)	70.00000000
Maximum Magnitude	6.40000000
Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone	No
Landslide	Yes
Liquefaction	Yes
Tsunami Inundation Zone	No

Economic Development Areas

Business Improvement District	None
Renewal Community	No
Revitalization Zone	None
State Enterprise Zone	None
State Enterprise Zone Adjacency	No
Targeted Neighborhood Initiative	None

Public Safety

Police Information

Bureau	West
Division / Station	Hollywood
Reporting District	627
Bureau	Central
Division / Station	Northeast
Reporting District	1101
Bureau	West
Division / Station	Hollywood
Reporting District	629

Fire Information

Division	3
Batallion	5
District / Fire Station	82
Division	3
Batallion	5
District / Fire Station	35
Red Flag Restricted Parking	No

CASE SUMMARIES

Note: Information for case summaries is retrieved from the Planning Department's Plan Case Tracking System (PCTS) database.

Case Number:	CPC-1990-596-GPC
Required Action(s):	GPC-GENERAL PLAN/ZONING CONSISTENCY (AB283)
Project Descriptions(s):	AB283 PROG PROP PLAN AMEND, ZC & HD CHANGES THROUGHOUT THE CITY IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT THE NEWLY CREATED OPEN SPACE (OS)
Case Number:	CPC-1990-496-GPC
Required Action(s):	GPC-GENERAL PLAN/ZONING CONSISTENCY (AB283)
Project Descriptions(s):	Data Not Available
Case Number:	CPC-1986-831-GPC
Required Action(s):	GPC-GENERAL PLAN/ZONING CONSISTENCY (AB283)
Project Descriptions(s):	HOLLYWOOD COMMUNITY PLAN REVISION/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY PLAN AMENDMENT, ZONE CHANGES AND HEIGHT DISTRICT CHANGES
Case Number:	ZA-2006-10405-ZV
Required Action(s):	ZV-ZONE VARIANCE
Project Descriptions(s):	A ZONE VARIANCE TO PERMIT SALE OF FULL LINE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AT PERMITTED SPECIAL EVENTS, IN THE OS-1XL ZONE.
Case Number:	ZA-1999-828-ZAI
Required Action(s):	ZAI-ZA INTERPRETATIONS
Project Descriptions(s):	TO CONSTRUCT SIX WATER TANKS AND EIGHT PUMP STATIONS IN THE OS-1XL ZONE.
Case Number:	ZA-1993-570-ZAI
Required Action(s):	ZAI-ZA INTERPRETATIONS
Project Descriptions(s):	GREEK THEATRE'S "WALL OF FAME"
Case Number:	ZA-1993-1041-ZAI
Required Action(s):	ZAI-ZA INTERPRETATIONS
Project Descriptions(s):	TO PERMIT AN ADDITION TO A SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING ON A LOT IN THE RE11-1 ZONE THAT IS HILLSIDE AREA AND ON A SUBSTANDARD HILLSIDE LIMITED STREET, WHERE THE STREET SURFACE (EXCLUDING CURBS) IS IMPROVED TO A SUBSTANDARD WIDTH OF 18 FEET.
Case Number:	ZA-1983-424
Required Action(s):	Data Not Available
Project Descriptions(s):	
Case Number:	CHC-2008-2724-HCM
Required Action(s):	HCM-HISTORIC CULTURAL MONUMENT
Project Descriptions(s):	DESIGNATION AS A HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT.
Case Number:	ENV-2006-10406-CE
Required Action(s):	CE-CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION
Project Descriptions(s):	A ZONE VARIANCE TO PERMIT SALE OF FULL LINE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AT PERMITTED SPECIAL EVENTS, IN THE OS-1XL ZONE.
Case Number:	MND-98-4-CUB
Required Action(s):	CUB-Conditional Use Beverage-Alcohol
Project Descriptions(s):	Data Not Available

DATA NOT AVAILABLE

CPC-24196
ORD-171177-SA131
ORD-169419-SA131
ORD-164713
YV-3813
CFG-1500



Address: 2801 N VERMONT CANYON
ROAD

APN: 5593002912

PIN #: 156B197 1

Tract: RANCHO LOS FELIS

Block: None

Lot: PT LT NO 38

Arb: 48

Zoning: OS-1XL

General Plan: Open Space



14-1522

MOTION

Section 22.171.10 of the Administrative Code provides that the City Council, the Cultural Heritage Commission, or the Director of Planning, may initiate consideration of a proposed site, building, or structure as a Historical-Cultural Monument. The Cultural Heritage Commission, after reviewing and investigating any such Council-initiated designation, shall approve or disapprove in whole or in part the proposed inclusion and submit a report upon such action to the Council.

Council District 4 is home to Griffith Park, a large municipal park at the eastern end of the Santa Monica Mountains in the Los Feliz neighborhood of Los Angeles. The park covers 4,510 acres of land, making it one of the largest urban parks in North America. In year 2009, Griffith Park became Historic-Cultural Monument Number 942. In the park is another place that deserves such recognition.

Dante's View, a terraced two-acre garden that includes picnic tables, benches, and an incredible view of the City of Angels. Dante's View on the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail is named for the park lover, Dante Orgolini, who started the garden there in 1964.

It is imperative that the city's historic-cultural treasures be celebrated, and foremost, that its historic natural sites be preserved for future generations. Dante's View located in the heart of Griffith Park is a gem and a gift from late Dante Orgolini for his commitment to the park and for his care and maintenance of the park. The site at Dante's View is an integral part of Griffith Park and of the greater community and it merits recognition.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council initiate consideration of Dante's View, located on the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail in Griffith Park, as a City Historic-Cultural Monument under the procedures of Sec. 22.171.10 of the Administrative Code, and instruct the Planning Department to prepare the Historic-Cultural Monument application for review and consideration by the Cultural Heritage Commission.

I FURTHER MOVE that after reviewing the application, the Cultural Heritage Commission submit its report and recommendations to the Council regarding the inclusion of the site at Dante's View in the City's list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

PRESENTED BY



TOM LaBONGE, Councilmember 4th District

SECONDED BY



NOV - 4 2014

ORIGINAL

5/27/15

File No. 14-1522

PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT relative to including Dante's View located on the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail in Griffith Park in the City's list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

Recommendations for Council action, pursuant to Motion (LaBonge - O'Farrell):

1. INSTRUCT the Department of City Planning to prepare a report and application relative to the inclusion of Dante's View located on the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail in Griffith Park in the City's list of Historic-Cultural Monuments and to submit the report and application to the Cultural Heritage Commission for review and consideration.
2. REQUEST the Cultural Heritage Commission to submit a report and recommendation to Council regarding the inclusion of Dante's View located on the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail in Griffith Park in the City's list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted

Summary:

At the public hearing held on May 19, 2015, the Planning and Land Use Management Committee considered Motion (LaBonge - O'Farrell) relative to including in the list of Historical-Cultural Monuments Dante's View located on the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail in Griffith Park. Councilmember LaBonge gave the Committee background information on this matter. Staff from the Department of City Planning also spoke. After an opportunity for public comment, the Committee recommended that Council approve the recommendations in the Motion. This matter is now forwarded to the Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
HUIZAR:	YES
CEDILLO:	ABSENT
ENGLANDER:	YES



SG
14-1522_rpt_plum_5-19-15

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-



Dante Orgolini

Dante Orgolini, the creator and namesake of Dante's View in Griffith Park, was a Brazilian journalist and artist. In 1926, as a young man newly transplanted to the United States, Dante pursued a degree in art at the prestigious Boston University. After he finished college, his plan was to return to Brazil once he had completed a set of commissioned murals along with three fellow Italian muralists at the Santa Barbara Courthouse.

But the beauty of California and Los Angeles in the early 1930s, the expanse of land, sea and sun coupled with a dynamic new entertainment industry, all conspired to keep him in the US. He quickly settled into life as a journalist for Brazil's popular *A Noite* newspaper covering Hollywood filmmakers and leading movie stars of the period.

During the years he raised his young family in Los Feliz, he discovered Griffith Park. Hiking every trail and promontory soon became a cherished pastime. Exploring the vast terrain of the park gave him a profound understanding of the importance of this natural area with its spectacular views above the ever-expanding city.

From these early days, armed with only a pick and shovel he had brought from home, and the help of fellow hikers and park rangers, Dante carved out a mountainside garden where today, all of us can come and experience this singular place, now and long into the future.

Vermont Tunnel cuts beneath at its northern portion. The West Trail joins the Charlie Turner Trail north of the Berlin Forest.

Mt. Hollywood

Directly behind due north of the Berlin Forest is Mt. Hollywood, which at 1,625 feet is the second tallest peak in Griffith Park, and is the highest point in Griffith Park open to the public. The majority of Mt. Hollywood is mixed chaparral. However, sections of it, including around the peak and a small section above the Berlin Forest, are covered in mixed scrub. The peak is an earth-covered graded and cleared portion measuring roughly 150 feet x 300 feet. A set of four picnic benches enclosed in a fence is present at the southern portion of this clearing. Within the center of this area, set in a concrete slab is a survey marker from the Los Angeles Department of Public Works and dated 1952 (Figure 121).



Figure 121: Mt. Hollywood peak: City Of Los Angeles Engineering Monument Marker. View S. Photo: ICF Jones & Stokes, August 2007.

Mt. Hollywood is the only vista in all of Griffith Park that presents 360 degree panoramic views of the surrounding region. Named trails with an end point atop Mount Hollywood include the Charlie Turner Trail which runs south of the peak, and 3-Mile Trail, which runs down the northwest face of Mt. Hollywood and ends at "3-Mile Tree." Two unnamed trails: one originating at the Bird Sanctuary and the other a spur off of East Ridge/Hogback Trail, are also present within the vicinity of Mt. Hollywood.

Immediately west of Mt. Hollywood peak on the west facing slope of the mountain is Captain's Roost with views of the west side to the Pacific Ocean. Captain's Roost is a folk garden with numerous plantings imported into the park by an unknown person, known only as "The Captain," who created the garden sometime in the 1940s. The Garden had been added to over time and has burned twice: in 1961 and again in May, 2007. A second folk garden called Dante's View is located due east of the Mt. Hollywood Peak (Figure 122). Dante's View was the work of one individual, Dante Orgolini, who constructed the site circa 1964. Dante's View consists of terraced walkways with rock retaining walls, rock planters, and metal picnic benches. A bronze plaque honoring Orgolini is present and set in a thick mortar slab base. Small palm and succulent specimens

are present within the garden. The original plant specimens imported into Dante's View were largely destroyed in a 1990 fire. The May 2007 fire burned the post-1990 replantings.



Figure 122: Dante's View, post-May 2007 Fire. View E.
Photo: ICF Jones & Stokes, October 2007.

Mt. Hollywood Drive, a two-lane paved automobile road, runs in a curving and switchback manner due west of Mt. Hollywood. One endpoint of this road is at Western Canyon just west of the Vermont Tunnel. Mt. Hollywood Drive continues well north of Mt. Hollywood, and ends at Griffith Park Drive. Griffith Park Drive traverses through Oak Canyon due south of and above Los Angeles Live Steamers. Like Vista Del Valle Road, Mt. Hollywood Drive is a former automobile road that has since been decommissioned and is used today as a trail. The hill-covered portion of Griffith Park between Western Canyon and Brush Canyon due west of it is covered in mixed scrub.

Brush Canyon

Brush Canyon is a large canyon due southwest of Mt. Hollywood and it runs southwest to northeast for roughly $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Canyon Drive, which leads to Camp Hollywoodland (Girls' camp), enters Griffith Park at the south edge of Brush Canyon. Though either side of Canyon Drive through Brush Canyon is landscaped, running parallel just east of the street is Oak, Sycamore and Riparian woodland ground cover. At the southern portion of Brush Canyon are the Bronson Caves. The Bronson Caves are actually a set of tunnels with one opening at the west edge of an unnamed hill and three openings at the east edge. The three openings at the east side converge into one opening within the hill, and the total length of the tunnel is roughly 137 feet. At the east side, two smaller openings frame one larger opening. The Bronson Caves are the result of rock quarrying activity present at the site from roughly 1900 to 1920. The height of the tunnels is roughly 8 feet, and jagged ore is present at all sides and above within the tunnels. The Bronson Caves are accessed by the Bronson Trail, which ends at the caves and originates off of a parking area at the end of Canyon Drive, in front of Camp Hollywoodland. Beyond Camp Hollywoodland, Canyon Drive becomes a hiking trail which continues north-east through Brush Canyon for 0.70

The May 2007 Fire

On May 8, 2007, a windswept fire burned 817 acres within the central, wilderness portion of Griffith Park. Named features that were either destroyed or seriously damaged include Captain's Roost, Dante's View, and non-built land within the Bird Sanctuary. The few buildings, structures objects present within these resources survived intact, though the majority of plant life was burned. Originating as an accidental, human-caused fire off of Commonwealth Canyon Drive above the Roosevelt Golf Course, the fire charred the east portion of the wilderness area, including the areas of and around Beacon Hill, Fern Canyon, Glendale Peak, Aberdeen Canyon, Mt. Hollywood, Spring Canyon, and Bee Rock. Lost in the burn area was the majority of the naturally occurring ground cover, most of which was chaparral and trees. As of March 2008 new plant life, much of which is ruderal, is beginning to reappear and efforts are underway by a variety of municipal, non-profit and private entities to restore the lost habitat.

city in the Western hemisphere.”³⁹ Mt. Hollywood is one of several peaks in the park where, in the same vista, one can see the downtown skyline, the southern portion of the city to San Pedro, the Westside to the beach, and much of the San Fernando Valley.

Work crews of unemployed men added more trails to the park during the Great Depression. Early efforts of this type were locally funded, but eventually federal dollars were added. Among other places in the park, the trails around Beacon Hill (then known as Shale Hill) on the east end of the park were constructed by the unemployed. Eventually, young men of the Civilian Conservation Corps built and maintained trails in the park. By the post-war period, the first of the park’s volunteer-tended gardens, Captain’s Roost, was established on the west-facing slope of Mt. Hollywood. It has a fine view of Los Angeles’ west side, the Pacific Ocean, and Catalina Island. Its beginnings, its founder, and the identities of some subsequent tenders are a mystery. The Captain, whose identity is not known, didn’t rule the Roost for very long. Several hikers remember meeting him in the mid-1940s at his small garden where he had fashioned a hand-carved table and bench. By 1949, he was gone, according to long-time Griffith Park Ranger Bill Eckert. An elderly woman Eckert knew only as Rae succeeded the Captain. Under Rae the garden bloomed. “It was beautiful,” he recalled. Rae took care of the Roost for perhaps 10 years.⁴⁰ Two other important volunteer-tended gardens—Dante’s View and Amir’s Garden—would be added in the years after the period of historic significance.

Frank Shearer

Frank Shearer was hired by the Park Department as a landscape engineer and draftsman in January 1910 and by May of that year was the acting superintendant. Most irrigation projects didn’t get off the ground until the Works Progress Administration (WPA) involvement in the 1930s; Shearer, however, had been an early advocate of large-scale irrigation in Griffith Park. Shearer was the mastermind behind Fern Dell, a garden of ferns, bridges and terraced pools. Located at 5375 Red Oak Avenue near the Western Avenue entrance to the park, Fern Dell’s dams and pools were constructed using boulders from other areas of the park.

³⁹ Edgar Lucien Larkin, *Los Angeles Christmas Present*, pamphlet, 1912, *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Interview of Bill Eckert, 20 May 1994.

Appendix 4:

Griffith Park Resources: Coordinate Points

GRIFFITH PARK RESOURCES: COORDINATE POINTS		
LOCATION AND RESOURCE	NORTH	WEST
RIVERSIDE DRIVE SOUTHEAST OF CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE		
Riverside Dr. Edison Station	34°06'46.51"	118°16'03.53
Breakfast Club	34°06'50.37"	118°16'07.80
Ranger House	34°06'54.30"	118°16'07.80"
Soccer Fields	34°06'57.09"	118°16'10.73"
Tennis Pro Shop	34°06'58.73"	118°16'12.84"
Main Tennis Court	34°06'59.23"	118°16'14.56"
Tennis Courts	34°07'00.63"	118°16'12.34"
Plunge: Main Building	34°07'04.29"	118°16'14.19"
Pool	34°07'04.72"	118°16'14.75"
Day Care Building	34°07'03.40"	118°16'15.87"
Playground	34°07'02.48"	118°16'15.82"
Former Costume Workshop and Area/ LA Shares	34°06'50.70"	118°16'11.76"
CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE:		
Griffith J. Griffith Statue	34°07'03.93"	118°16'19.01"
Pony Stables	34°07'12.07"	118°16'22.17"
Pony Ride	34°07'15.64"	118°16'24.64"
1984 Olympics Benches	34°07'15.69"	118°17'25.27"
Concessions Building	34°07'16.52"	118°16'24.15"
Griffith Park & Southern RR & Assoc. Resources	34°07'18.95"	118°16'24.21"
DWP Building	34°07'20.81"	118°16'25.30"
CRYSTAL SPRINGS: PICNIC AREA, POTE FIELD, RANGERS STATION, ETC:		
DWP Building	34°07'51.79"	118°16'33.39"
Pettigrew Complex	34°07'53.80"	118°16'35.75"
Minimal Traditional Restroom Bldg.	34°07'51.29"	118°16'30.28"
Recent Firestation	34°07'54.57"	118°16'33.67"
Pote Field	34°07'59.34"	118°16'41.74"
Pote Field Concessions and Clubhouse	34°07'59.81"	118°16'38.23"
Rangers Headquarters	34°07'59.17"	118°16'45.42"
Education and Visitor's Center	34°07'58.11"	118°16'48.09"
Feliz Adobe	34°07'58.00"	118°16'49.87"
WESTERN HERITAGE DRIVE:		
Zoo Magnet School	34°08'44.23"	118°17'03.68"
Auxilliary (L. A. Zoo) Support Bldgs.	34°08'46.87"	118°16'58.82"
Autry National Center	34°08'55.06"	118°16'52.47"
L.A. Zoo	34°08'54.08"	118°17'08.70"
ZOO DRIVE NORTH:		
Sycamore Grove	34°09'07.40"	118°16'47.69"
Ferraro Soccer Fields	34°09'16.76"	118°16'50.99"
Don Park	34°09'10.02"	118°17'10.14"

Merry Go Round	34°07'57.68"	118°17'01.67"
1950s Restroom	34°07'59.19"	118°17'00.77"
Seal Show	34°08'02.40"	118°17'00.43"
c.1930s bathroom	34°08'03.37"	118°17'00.07"
Sycamore row with picnic tables	34°08'01.62"	118°16'56.30"
Mystery Bldg., Square Plan	34°08'03.63"	118°16'59.56"
Spanish Revival Service Facility	34°08'06.59"	118°17'00.91"
Recreation Centers Centennial Plaque	34°08'06.03"	118°17'00.62"
Marty Tregnan Golf Academy	34°07'14.98"	118°16'30.90"
GRIFFITH PARK: AMENITIES EAST AND NORTH OF LOS ANGELES RIVER		
LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD:		
Los Feliz Golf Course (LFGC)	34°07'29.27"	118°16'13.27"
LFGC: Los Feliz Cafe	34°07'24.04"	118°16'09.47"
CHEVY CHASE DRIVE:		
North Atwater Park	34°07'57.76"	118°16'19.88"
Griffith Park Central Service Yard	34°08'13.40"	118°16'23.30"
RIVERSIDE DRIVE NORTH OF LOS ANGELES RIVER:		
Bette Davis Picnic Area	34°09'27.72"	118°17'47.16"
Los Angeles Equestrian Center	34°09'37.51"	118°18'32.14"
Pollywog	34°09'19.92"	118°19'12.17"
GRIFFITH PARK: SOUTHERN PORTION AMENITIES		
VERMONT CANYON ROAD:		
Roosevelt Municipal Golf Course (RGC)	34°07'11.61"	118°17'26.52"
RGC Café and Shop	34°07'06.02"	118°17'37.39"
Floyd Bailey Plaque and Tree	34°07'06.58"	118°17'37.73"
RCG Auxiliary Buildings	34°07'08.95"	118°17'37.61"
VERMONT CANYON ROAD→Boy Scout Rd:		
Restroom	34°07'05.33"	118°17'40.59"
Picnic Area	34°07'04.55"	118°17'45.34"
Ampitheater	34°07'05.22"	118°17'46.21"
VERMONT CANYON ROAD→COMMONWEALTH CANYON DRIVE:		
Tennis Courts	34°07'15.97"	118°17'36.09"
Nursery Caretaker's House	34°07'14.34"	118°17'09.34"
Picnic Area	34°07'15.99"	118°17'08.87"
Nursery Office	34°07'17.35"	118°17'08.69"
Nursery Multi-Purpose Building	34°07'17.84"	118°17'06.05"
Nursery: Greenhouse	34°07'16.94"	118°17'06.76"
Nursery: Additional Greenhouses	34°07'16.82"	118°17'03.87"

ZOO DRIVE:		
Pecan Grove Picnic Area	34°09'14.41"	118°17'23.30"
De Anza Monument	34°09'15.69"	118°17'25.27"
Riverside Drive Bridge	34°09'22.23"	118°17'39.38"
Picnic Area	34°09'17.25"	118°17'34.17"
Picnic Area	34°09'19.08"	118°17'54.21"
Griffith Maintenance Service Yard	34°09'20.75"	118°18'05.89"
Live Steamers	34°09'18.24"	118°18'08.83"
Picnic Area	34°09'19.46"	118°18'16.24"
Travel Town: Entrance	34°09'14.21"	118°18'30.71"
Travel Town: Early Restroom	34°09'17.64"	118°18'27.96"
Travel Town: Admin Bldg.	34°09'17.93"	118°18'28.31"
Travel Town: "Spirit of CCC" Statue	34°09'16.48"	118°18'26.66"
Martinez Arena	34°09'13.21"	118°18'38.11"
ZOO DRIVE → FOREST LAWN DRIVE:		
Silverlake Headworks	34°09'12.77"	118°19'03.65"
Junior Achievement Center	34°09'97.97"	118°19'08.97"
GRIFFITH PARK DRIVE:		
Mineral Wells Picnic Area	34°08'46.02"	118°17'40.91"
Mineral Wells: C.1950s (?) Bathroom	34°08'47.95"	118°17'42.56"
Mineral Wells: Concessions Stand	34°08'48.33"	118°17'43.81"
Animal Hospital (Recent)	34°08'49.60"	118°17'40.85"
Wilson & Harding Golf Courses (WHGC)	34°08'35.93"	118°17'11.88"
WHGC: Clubhouse	34°08'38.96"	118°17'21.45"
WHGC: Driving Range	34°08'39.52"	118°17'26.12"
WHGC: Restroom	34°08'14.80"	118°17'03.52"
WHGC: Wood Shed	34°08'31.82"	118°17'08.48"
WHGC: Park Style Landscape Features	34°18'96.3"	118°28'51.5"
WHGC: Golf Shop, Café, Restroom Bldg.	34°08'19.28"	118°16'50.49"
GRIFFITH PARK DRIVE→CAMP DRIVE:		
Boy's Camp	34°08'26.63"	118°17'47.87"
Foundations of 1920s Cabins	34°08'22.73"	118°17'49.36"
Abandoned Pool	34°08'19.63"	118°17'53.07"
GRIFFITH PARK DRIVE CTD:		
NYC 3 Picnic Area	34°08'22.57"	118°17'17.65"
NYC 2 Picnic Area	34°08'18.99"	118°17'17.44"
NYC 1 Picnic Area	34°08'12.18"	118°17'17.34"
Remains of Zoo Keepers House	34°08'06.03"	118°17'21.23"
Old Zoo Buildings	34°08'00.59"	118°17'19.33"
Land and Water Conservation Fund Plaque	34°08'05.90"	118°17'11.10"
Shane's Inspiration	34°08'06.77"	118°17'04.50"
Wilson Harding Turf Maintenance Facility	34°08'10.51"	118°17'03.73"
GRIFFITH PARK DRIVE: PARK CENTER:		
Tennis Courts	34°07'59.44"	118°16'57.57"

VERMONT CANYON ROAD CTD:		
Greek Theatre	34°07'40.89"	118°17'03.55"
Greek Theatre Box Office	34°07'14.15"	118°17'47.03"
Bird Sanctuary	34°07'28.59"	118°17'49.10"
EAST OBSERVATORY ROAD:		
Griffith Observatory	34°07'06.07"	118°18'01.33"
VERMONT CANYON ROAD→ MT. HOLLYWOOD DRIVE:		
Mt. Hollywood Tunnel	34°07'25.09"	118°18'02.04"
WESTERN CANYON ROAD:		
Rock Wall	34°07'24.75"	118°18'08.54"
Picnic Area	34°07'28.47"	118°18'22.76"
FERN DELL DRIVE/ FERN DELL:		
Fern Dell	34°07'38.02"	118°18'26.60"
Berlin Bear Monument	34°06'30.01"	118°18'26.03"
Rollin Lane Plaque	34°06'30.00"	118°18'29.10"
Lief Erickson Monument	34°06'29.44"	118°18'29.59"
City HCM #112 Plaque/ Fern Dell Entrance	34°06'33.94"	118°18'27.40"
Soroptimist Picnic Area and Plaque	34°06'42.50"	118°18'25.40"
The Trails Café	34°06'50.26"	118°18'23.61"
Pow Wow Gathering Area	34°06'50.06"	118°18'28.29"
Ranger's Facilities	34°06'52.31"	118°18'29.20"
Ranger's House/ Fern Dell Nature Museum	34°06'46.12"	118°18'27.74"
CANYON ROAD:		
Girls Camp	34°06'32.49"	118°18'51.96"
Girls Camp: 1950s Era Cabins	34°06'36.34"	118°18'55.14"
CANYON LAKE DRIVE:		
Lake Hollywood Park	34°07'37.16"	118°19'33.05"
Hollywood Sign	34°08'02.57"	118°19'17.98"
WILDERNESS AREA RESOURCES		
NAMED MOUNTAINS AND PEAKS:		
Beacon Hill	34°07'42.43"	118°16'38.44"
Glendale Peak	34°07'28.47"	118°17'16.00"
Mt. Hollywood	34°07'42.71"	118°18'04.19"
Mt. Lee	34°08'05.07"	118°19'14.22"
Mt. Chapel	34°08'11.30"	118°18'30.21"
Mt. Bell	34°08'10.95"	118°18'14.70"
Bee Rock	34°08'04.11"	118°17'35.78"
NAMED CANYONS:		
Fern Canyon	34°08'04.11"	118°18'14.70"
Aberdeen Canyon	34°07'28.31"	118°17'21.46"
Vermont Canyon	34°07'18.51"	118°17'52.20"

Western Canyon	34°07'19.61"	118°18"27.40"
Brush Canyon	34°07'33.31"	118°18"43.62"
Spring Canyon	34°07'58.60"	118°17"43.88"
Royce's Canyon	34°08'57.44"	118°18"27.91"
Toyon Canyon	34°08'37.09"	118°18"08.38"
Oak Canyon	34°09'02.95"	118°17"59.54"
NATURAL AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES:		
Cedar Grove	34°07'12.23"	118°16"57.94"
Berlin Forest	34°07'19.35"	118°18"01.56"
Bronson Caves	34°06'16.31"	118°18"50.54"
3-Mile Tree	34°07'54.07"	118°18"03.54"
Captain's Roost	34°07'40.82"	118°18"08.48"
Dante's View	34°07'45.77"	118°17"54.14"
Bee Rock, Sandstone Face	34°08'04.30"	118°17"34.59"
Amir's Garden	34°08'32.95"	118°17"34.83"
SELECTED OBJECTS (Non 1930s Park Style)		
Former Site of Airfield Beacon	34°07'42.43"	118°16"38.44"
Early Water Tank Near Cedar Grove	34°07'16.53"	118°16"57.99"
Hogback Bridge	34°07'34.33"	118°17"19.26"
for list of 1930s era infrastructure objects in burn area, please see Appendix 6		
NOTABLE VISTAS:		
Vista View Point	34°07'24.82"	118°17"07.00"
Griffith Observatory	34°07'06.07"	118°18"01.33"
Mt. Hollywood	34°07'42.71"	118°18"04.19"
Dante's View	34°07'45.77"	118°17"54.14"
Lake Hollywood Park	34°07'37.15"	118°19"33.70"
CLOSED TO PUBLIC AUTO ROADS; END POINTS:		
Vista Del Valle Drive, end point northwest	34°08'10.09"	118°18"20.56"
Vista Del Valle Drive, end point southeast	34°07'16.64"	118°17"17.03"
Commonwealth Avenue end point north	34°07'16.62"	118°17"17.00"
Commonwealth Avenue end point south	34°07'07.43"	118°17"10.25"
Mt. Hollywood Drive, end point north	34°08'58.00"	118°18"07.97"
Mt. Hollywood Drive, end point south	34°07'24.23"	118°17"59.12"
Mt. Lee Drive, end point northwest	34°08'04.44"	118°19"17.51"
Mt. Lee Drive, end point southeast	34°08'00.02"	118°18"57.69"

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Paul Dean

The Lessons of Orgolini's City Garden

December 20, 1986 | Paul Dean

Someone has stolen Charlie Turner's Christmas tree.

And his hose. Graffiti upon graffiti are constant leavings. Vandals beheaded a mature ginkgo tree planted as a memorial. Then topped the magnolias.

"It seems to be getting worse every year," Charlie said. "You try to get used to it . . . but it was a perfect little Christmas tree and all I've got is a hole in the ground."

He thought about graffiti by the layer and the naked vagrant who takes a cold-water bath whenever Charlie refills the horse trough: "If it got too much you'd say to hell with it. But I can't. You just know you've got to go on because what else are you going to do?"

There's a better question: Without Charlie Turner, what else would the gentle and discerning do with the frosty mornings and summer afternoons they spend hiking to a sanctuary called Dante's View?

The View is on a high slope of Mt. Hollywood overlooking Griffith Park Observatory and downtown stress. Dante Orgolini, a Brazilian-born Italian journalist and muralist, climbed here in 1965 and scraped out an arboretum from unkempt chaparral. The city decided to play monkey in the middle, seeing absolutely no evil in the fine care-taking.

With cultivation came stands of eucalyptus, magnolia, jade, leggy poinsettias grown from Christmas gifts, many disciples and an unhired hand named Charlie Turner.

Dante died in 1978, at 73. Charlie inherited Orgolini's garden of winding walkways and private moments. He is 81. As Orgolini cultivated community, a place above metropolitan grubbiness for those of sturdy legs and clean lungs, so has Turner turned an example.

"I'm a role model for a lot of people," Charlie stated. "I'm an example for older people who might be dragged into thinking that life and fitness stop at 50 or with retirement. I show younger people how to escape everything down there, especially loneliness."

Charlie knows much about loneliness. His parents died before his seventh birthday. He sailed alone from Liverpool to Canada to work farms in Manitoba, hamburger joints in Ontario and the Royal Canadian Air Force in France during World War II.

Charlie ("I never married because I'm a happy loner") came to Los Angeles in 1952 and clerked until he was 70. Retirement scared him. "For the first time I could see the end, I could see people actually looking forward to staying home and watching television."

Fortunately, Charlie was a runner and a window box gardener and as sure as God made little green thumbs, there came the day when Charlie hiked Griffith and found Orgolini's garden.

"It was the most fortunate thing that has ever happened to me. Because if you can get up in the morning with somewhere to go, with something to do and with friends to see. . . ."

Charlie's friends are indeed a wonderful lot. They include the younger and purer generation who run daily, sleep nights and shop at Mrs. Gooch's. Yet dauntless seniors are the aristocracy.

The 60-year-olds with favorite walking sticks and berets.

The couples in their 70s who still hold hands and laugh together.

The 83-year-old in a 10-K T-shirt who outwalks her dog. And all those on the trail from the observatory parking lot who say good morning to strangers.

"Where," Charlie asked, "would I ever go to meet people like this? I'm getting too much good out of this to ever give it up."

So he gives by keeping the gardens, spending his minuscule pension on plants, planting saplings he will never see grow to maturity.

They, his regular irregulars, have given by arranging a city resolution, for mounting a bronze plaque to remember Orgolini, by passing the hat for Charlie's 80th birthday present—a round trip ticket to Paris.

Together they enjoy pot-luck breakfasts early on Thursday and weekend mornings, their peace, their bond and a little wine at the whisper of any anniversary.

"When I die," says Charlie, "I want to be cremated and have my ashes brought here."

That's what they did for Dante.

And an acacia tree has grown from where his ashes fell.

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Hike the World, Stay at Home : Thanks to Southern California's Richly Diverse Terrain, You Don't Have to Walk Far to Imagine Yourself in a Foreign Country

June 10, 1990 | JOHN MC KINNEY

Starting next Sunday, John McKinney's popular Day Hike column, which has appeared in the Saturday View Section for 3 1/2 years, will move to the Travel Section. Under a new title, Hiking, McKinney will continue to cover local walks, but will also take readers on hikes throughout the West and even to foreign destinations. McKinney is author of the two-volume "Day Hiker's Guide to Southern California" (Olympus Press).

I have contemplated the Southland from a hundred peaks, meditated upon it along thousands of miles of trail, but it wasn't until I hiked across the island of Rhodes, 7,000 miles from home, that I began to understand Southern California's place in the world.

A few summers back, I was hiking through a Greek government nature preserve called Valley of the Pethoules (butterfly). A fairyland it was. Countless orange butterflies are attracted to the valley by the sweet resin of the storax tree, which is used to make frankincense.

As I hiked along I clapped my hands, and the butterflies rose in clouds. How very much like the scene back home in Pt. Mugu State Park, I thought, where millions of orange monarch butterflies cluster every autumn.

Leaving the butterflies, my trail on Rhodes climbed out of the fairyland into a forest. Eventually the rocky path took me to the open gate of Kalopetra (good rock) Monastery. The young monk in the traditional black cassock and stovepipe hat was as surprised to see me as I was to see him. With traditional Greek hospitality, he shared what he had—the panoramic view from the monastery's lofty heights.

As we looked over valleys and villages, forest and sea, we talked a lot about the island—the late arrival of the wildflowers, how the rocky peaks "touch the sky." When the monk learned I was from Southern California, he wanted to know what my land looked like.

I thought for a moment. "It looks a lot like Rhodes."

"It must be very beautiful then," he said. "And do these people of Southern California love their land?"

A harder question, and one I've thought and written about many times. "I don't think they know very much about it," I hedged.

On several other occasions in Greece, since my accidental pilgrimage to Good Rock Monastery, I've hiked to a little bit of Southern California. And many more times I've discovered a little bit of Greece in Southern California.

Looking at the harbor scene while approaching by boat, Catalina Island, for example, always reminds me of a Greek island, one of the Cyclades perhaps. Catalina is sparse and Spartan, with a deep blue bay and plenty of wild goats.

Unquestionably the Southland shares a sea-tempered Mediterranean climate—the hot days, the cool nights, the long, hot summers, the short, rainy winters—with Spain, Greece, Italy, North Africa and the South of France.

Some parts of the Southern California coast seem bathed in that soft, magical Mediterranean light, in particular the south-facing Malibu and Santa Barbara beaches and the south slopes of the Santa Monica and Santa Ynez mountains.

I'm far from the first to make this comparison. A hundred years ago, travel writers and tourist brochures were beckoning Europeans and Americans from colder climes to visit "America's Italy."

Although the Mediterranean theme dominated, other scenic comparisons were made by early boosters. "Our Araby" and "Little Switzerland" were two of the more popular nicknames for Southern California. When they visit us, Northern Europeans identify with the high country of the San Gabriel, San Bernardino and San Jacinto mountains. Immigrants from the Middle East and North Africa have discovered many Southern California sandscapes that look like home.

The extent to which our outdoor environment can look like (or be *made* to look like) somewhere else became clear to me during one college summer break when I worked as a movie location scout.

I saw parts of Southern California—the Santa Monica Mountains in particular—that doubled for the antebellum South and the Old West, South Carolina and South Vietnam, plus Greece, Italy and the South of France. Arid dry grass slopes became the steppes of Asia, red-rock canyons the planet Mars.

So, armed with a little imagination, a good map, sturdy shoes and a day pack, you can explore the world by exploring Southern California.

Examples are everywhere. The Siberia Creek Trail in the San Bernardino Mountains leads to the world's tallest lodgepole pine. Another short path leads to the world-champion Joshua tree.

Yet another path crosses San Miguel Island, part of the Channel Islands and home of the largest elephant seal population on earth. You can visit the lowest place in North America and one of the lowest elevations in the world, in Death Valley.

If you are really motivated to see all that Southern California's backcountry has to offer, you could follow the Pacific Crest Trail from the Mexico border through the desert, across the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains, and over to the High Sierra. In all, the trail extends more than 2,000 miles to Canada.

But in addition to diverse topography, hikers also can discover the fascinating human history of the region. Orange County, often mistakenly stereotyped as all-Anglo, reveals a Spanish, Indian, German, Polish and Japanese heritage to the backcountry traveler. The names in the county parks and Cleveland National Forest—from Flores to Anaheim to Modjeska—speak of this rich diversity.

There are many ways to explore this land. Sometimes I love to hike, other times to climb, trek, stride, jog, bushwhack and boulder-hop to a goal: a majestic viewpoint, a waterfall, a hidden beach.

But often the less goal-oriented side of me prefers a more relaxed approach, best expressed by the Spanish word *paseo*. A *paseo* can be loosely translated as a leisurely walk, an unbusinesslike excursion, a pleasurable picnic.

In the weeks to come, I'll be detailing some of my favorite hikes—from treks to *paseos* in Southern California, the West, even foreign countries. But for now, here's how to set your own international itinerary without leaving home:

The Mediterranean

In Southern California, it doesn't take much to imagine that you're hiking through countries bordering the Mediterranean. Besides the similar climate and terrain (even the drought-fed threat of brush fires is common to both regions), Latin place names abound.

The early Catholic padres named peaks, valleys, rivers and canyons after their favorite saints, and Spanish words make up much of our geographical vocabulary: *canon*, *rio*, *arroyo*, *punta*, *mar*. One of the major reasons that the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area was set aside in 1978 was to preserve an example of a Mediterranean ecosystem, the only such Mediterranean-like locale under National Park Service protection. The Santa Monica Mountains are the only range in America to bisect a metropolis, and they are easily accessible.

Some of my favorite places are the mountain summits. I particularly like to ascend Mishe Mokwa Trail, through Circle X Ranch, to 3,111-foot Sandstone Peak above Malibu, the highest point of the Santa Monica Mountains.

I also like to look down on the Mediterranean world from Overlook Trail and Mugu Peak in Pt. Mugu State Park. The nearly completed 65-mile Backbone Trail, which travels the spine of the Santa Monica Mountains, from Will Rogers State Historic Park to Pt. Mugu, also offers grand views of brushy hills, the Channel Islands and blue sea to the horizon.

The Santa Ynez Mountains behind Santa Barbara, part of Los Padres National Forest, also project a Mediterranean flavor. Rattlesnake, Cold Spring, San Ysidro and Jesusita are four of my favorite trails. They generally follow streams to the top of the range. The trails begin in lush canyon bottoms, zigzag up the hot dry canyon walls, and intersect El Camino Cielo (the sky road), which offers sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean, Channel Islands and coastal plain.

My favorite taste of Italy isn't far from downtown Los Angeles. Sunrise and sunset are two times I like to hike in Griffith Park, to a special viewpoint garden on the shoulder of Mt. Hollywood.

Called Dante's View, it isn't named for the 14th-Century Florentine, but for 20th-Century artist Dante Orgolini, an Italian immigrant. Orgolini was a Depression-era muralist who, in his later years, put his artistic energies into this lovely garden shaded with palms, pines and pepper trees.

Just about everywhere at lower elevations is the Mediterranean flora we call chaparral. One chaparral plant, chamise, an Americanized version of a Spanish word meaning "brush" or "firewood," is the most ubiquitous plant in Southern California. Some hikers say another chaparral plant, ceanothus—with its clouds of soft blue, white or lavender flowers—is the prettiest.

To Spanish settlers, scrub oak looked like a plant from back home that they called *chaparro*. The territory where *chaparro* grows we now call chaparral, and that's why cowboys wear "chaps." The nature trails of Eaton Canyon Park above Pasadena is one of the best places to learn about the chaparral environment.

Little Switzerland

For a taste of the Alpine world, I head for the top of the San Gabriel Mountains—Mt. Baldy, Mt. Islip, Mt. Baden-Powell.

Most prominent, however, is the San Geronio Wilderness in San Bernardino National Forest. This is the site of Southern California's highest peak—11,499-foot Mt. San Geronio—on the high spine of the San Bernardino Mountains.

Mt. San Geronio stands shoulder to shoulder with four other two-mile-high peaks: Dobbs, Jepson, Charlton and San Bernardino. The mountain is most striking in winter when its snow-covered peak can be seen reaching far above the metropolis.

The alpine meadows on the mountain shoulder are dotted with wild rose, lemon lily, mountain iris, Indian paintbrush and golden yarrow. Bighorn sheep roam the high slopes, and golden eagles soar over the summit.

At the top there's a 360-degree panoramic view—from the Pacific to the far reaches of the Mojave, from the Mexican border to another of the Southland's Switzerland-like ranges: the southern Sierra Nevadas.

The San Jacinto Mountains are probably the most Swiss-like terrain in Southern California. Even the gondolas of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway are Swiss-built, and they give hikers access in 18 minutes to country that once required a day's strenuous hike to reach.

The tram carries you over one of the most abrupt mountain faces in the world—over cliffs that only a bighorn sheep can scale, and over several ecological zones, from palms to pines. In few parts of the world do alpine and desert vegetation thrive in such close proximity.

Upon disembarking from the tram, I like to hike through lush meadows, white fir and lodgepole pine, and rest at Round Valley, colored in the spring with lupine, monkey flower and scarlet bugler.

If I'm feeling energetic, I stay on the trail to the top of Mt. San Jacinto. Naturalist John Muir found the view from the summit "the most sublime spectacle to be found anywhere on this earth!"

The San Jacinto Mountains offer four-season hiking. Since it's generally about 30 or 40 degrees cooler than Palm Springs, which is visible below, this is a great place to beat the heat. In winter, don't forget to bring your cross-country skis for the ultimate Switzerland experience.

Arabian Days

Southern Californians who like the desert are fortunate in having not one, but two vast deserts in close proximity: the Mojave and the Colorado.

In the heart of the East Mojave National Scenic Area, about 35 miles as the crow flies from the town of Baker, is a stunningly beautiful slice of the Sahara—the Kelso Dunes, one of the tallest dune systems in America.

One of my favorite trails leads to the top of the dunes, but it's tough walking in soft sand to the top. One step forward, two steps back. Any time but summer is a good time to explore this area.

When sand slides down a steep dune slope, it makes an unusual low rumbling sound that reminds some people of a Tibetan gong.

Of course, the classic North African desert scene includes not only mighty dunes, but a palm-fringed oasis or two. We have plenty of palm oases in Southern California, where the native California fan palm thrives.

I like hiking to the oasis on the outskirts of Palm Springs, known collectively as the Indian Canyons—Palm, Murray and Andreas. Palm Canyon, with 3,000 palms, is the uncrowned king of American desert oases. Surrounded by arid, rocky mountains, the canyon is strikingly similar to parts of Israel.

I'm a genuine admirer of the California fan palm, and like to trek to the oases where they gather. Two delightful trails in Joshua Tree National Monument lead to Forty-Nine Palms Oasis and Lost Palms Oasis. Another good hike for palm fans is Borrego Palm Canyon in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

Notable Coasts

Nearly every time I hike along Leo Carrillo State Beach on the Los Angeles County/Ventura County line, I see a movie company in action. The propmaster rolls a few exotic palms on the beach, and Leo Carrillo doubles for the South Seas.

If it's the rocky shores of England I'm after, I like to take the train to Del Mar and hike Del Mar Beach to Torrey Pines State Reserve. When a winter storm rages against the shingle beach, it's easy to recall the Devon and Dorset coasts of Britain. Nearby, Cardiff by the Sea must have been named by some Anglophile who was inspired by its resemblance to the seaport town of Cardiff in southeast Wales.

One favorite coast walk that reminds me of a far-off locale is the hike up Morro Bay's sandspit for a close-up look at "the Gibraltar of the Pacific": Morro Rock. Another notable coast walk is over the Hollywood Beach dunes in Oxnard.

That silent movie classic "The Sheik" was filmed in the Arabian-like dunes there, and I always imagine Rudolph Valentino popping out of a tent with one of his smitten women.

And then there are the nature preserves of the Channel Islands—Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, Santa Rosa and San Miguel—that many scientists call the "American Galapagos."

The isolation of the islands helped preserve plants that either were altered through evolution on the mainland or perished altogether at the hands of man. In early spring, I like to head for Anacapa Island, where the giant coreopsis, or tree sunflower, is something to behold.

When the coreopsis blooms, it looks like someone threw a giant yellow blanket over the island.

So there you have it—the world at your feet. You can enjoy all the benefits of a vacation abroad, but with far less hassle. No funny currencies, no foreign languages to learn and, best of all, you won't get jet lag.

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Charlie Turner; Griffith Garden Caretaker

February 02, 1997 | ERIC LICHTBLAU | TIMES STAFF WRITER

Charlie Turner, a onetime insurance clerk who flourished in his later years as the pruner, planter, irrigator and general caretaker for a famed garden spot atop Griffith Park, died Friday at a Burbank convalescent home. He was 91.

"He was such a gentle man, and he was a friend to anyone who came into the garden. He inspired people, he truly did," said longtime friend Tom LaBonge.

Turner's oasis was called Dante's View, a garden retreat nestled in Griffith Park's Mt. Hollywood overlooking the downtown skyline from 1,400 feet above sea level.

The British-born Turner began tending the three-acre garden in the 1970s as an assistant to its namesake, artist Dante Orgolini, who had carved the spot out of native chaparral in 1965.

Turner took over as unofficial, volunteer caretaker in 1978 after Orgolini's death. For the next 15 years, he hiked to the garden virtually every morning to tend the plants, trim the trees, water the soil and erase any graffiti.

Wearing his trademark yellow tennis hat, he would give impromptu tours of the site, offering cookies and slices of history to the many hikers and nature lovers who ventured more than a mile up from the Griffith Observatory trail head that now bears his name.

He earned the nickname "mayor of Griffith Park," and his birthday parties at Dante's View became the stuff of lore. He rode a few years ago in a Rose Bowl float patterned after "the urban hiker." And even after age and arthritis stopped him from hiking the Mt. Hollywood trail at the age of 90, city employees regularly gave him a lift to the garden on fire roads.

"He was the mayor, he oversaw the place," said park ranger Lloyd Payne, on duty Saturday at Griffith Park. "He had quite a following of people. It was like a family that went up there, and everyone knew him."

Vicky Lacko became one of Turner's closest friends over the last decade, as she and her two dogs joined Turner each morning for his daily pilgrimage.

"He'd just stand there and look down on the city and reminisce," she said. Turner, who never married, "told me one time, 'the trees are like the children I never had.'"

Turner held a series of nondescript jobs through much of his life, working as a cabin boy on steamships out of his hometown of Liverpool as a teenager and then later as a hotel deskman and an insurance clerk in Los Angeles. During World War II, he also served in France with the Canadian military, LaBonge said.

He found his true calling only in later years in his volunteer work at Dante's View.

In one interview several years ago, he said: "I made more friends here than I previously did in all the rest of my life. . . . I think the garden has a nice way of weeding people. The nice ones stay and the bums and the troublemakers go away."

But there were darker moments, too, even amid the geraniums, lilies, eucalyptus and jade that made Dante's View such an inspiring community favorite.

Tumbles on the garden terrace landed Turner in the hospital several times with broken ribs, and a 1990 wildfire that virtually destroyed Dante's View forced him to flee the mountain. Cobbling together donations and public money, he led the campaign to replant it.

His last visit came just a few weeks ago, said LaBonge, an aide to Mayor Richard Riordan who took over Turner's garden caretaker duties in 1993.

Turner succumbed to respiratory failure Friday with little apparent pain, LaBonge said.

A memorial service is scheduled for 10 a.m. Feb. 9 at Dante's View.

Griffith Park: Mt. Hollywood from Griffith Observatory

Friday, August 9th, 2013

Mt. Hollywood Trail: From Griffith Observatory to Mt. Hollywood is 3 miles round trip with 500-foot elevation gain

Griffith Park's best-known hike leads to the top of 1,625-foot Mt. Hollywood, the park's premiere peak. Mt. Hollywood is not the mountain crowned by the historic Hollywood sign; however, the trail to it delivers great views of Mt. Lee and the bold HOLLYWOOD lettering across its summit. Mt. Hollywood can be hiked by way of several different trails (The Trailmaster's favorites are included in [HIKE Griffith Park & Hollywood Hills](#)) but the route from Griffith Observatory is by far the most popular.

On clear days the entire basin is spread out before you from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Sometimes mounts San Geronio, Baldy and San Jacinto can be seen. The view at night can be spectacular, too.

Griffith Observatory opened to the public in 1935 and has been a cultural institution, tourist attraction and L.A. landmark ever since. Closed in 2002 for an extensive renovation, the observatory reopened in 2006, retaining its Art Deco exterior and adding all new exhibits and a theater.

The 2007 Griffith Park came dangerously close to the observatory, seared Mt. Hollywood and severely damaged Captain's Roost and Dante's View, two lovely rest stops along the trail to Mt. Hollywood. Post fire replanting efforts have greatly benefited Dante's View.



The trailhead for Mt. Hollywood is named for longtime park volunteer Charlie Turner.

Artist-writer Dante Orgolini, an immigrant of Italian descent, began planting a two-acre retreat of pine, palm and pepper trees high on the south-facing slope of Mt. Hollywood in 1965. British-born retired insurance agent Charlie Turner took over as caretaker in 1978 after Orgolini's death and, for the next 15 years, until he was nearly 90, hiked to the garden virtually every morning to tend the plants. The trailhead for Mt. Hollywood is named for Turner.

DIRECTIONS

From Los Feliz Boulevard, take Vermont Avenue into the park. Follow signs to the observatory and park in the north end of the lot farthest from the observatory near the signed and landscaped Charlie Turner Trailhead.



Mt. Hollywood Map by Mark Chumley (click to enlarge)

THE HIKE

A brief ascent along the narrow ridgeline dividing Vermont Canyon on the east and Western Canyon on the west leads to Berlin Forest. Among the trees planted by L.A.'s German sister city officials, is a whimsical sign pointing northeast to Berlin, 6,000 miles away.

The path traverses the top of the Vermont Canyon Road tunnel and about 0.9 mile out reaches a four-way junction on the brushy shoulder of Mt. Hollywood. The left branch loops around the west side, the right around the east side.

Ascend the right (east) branch of the Mt. Hollywood Trail to Dante's View, where a water fountain and picnic tables suggest a rest stop for hikers. Dedicated volunteers maintain the garden. Continue the short distance to the top of Mt. Hollywood and enjoy the view.

Return the way you came or descend the western loop of the Mt. Hollywood Trail past Captain's Roost, a rest stop, to a junction with Charlie Turner Trail.

Interested in more hikes in Griffith Park and Hollywood Hills? Check out my guide: [HIKE Griffith Park & Hollywood Hills](#)



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NEWS

Griffith Park garden named cultural monument

By Luis Rivas, 5/21/2015

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Every morning — with very few exceptions — Councilman Tom LaBonge, 4th District, wakes up early and hikes in Griffith Park. Upon reaching the top of Mt. Hollywood, he takes a moment to appreciate one of the park's soon-to-be historic-cultural monuments, the secluded garden known as Dante's View.



Dante's View in Griffith Park provides hikers with a great city view. (photo by Luis Rivas)

Hikers have visited the two-acre, terraced garden to relax and enjoy the panoramic view of Los Angeles since it was established in 1964 by Dante Orgolini.

On Tuesday, the Los Angeles City Council approved a motion by LaBonge to recognize Dante's View as an historic-cultural monument, which preserves and protects the site from future alterations.

LaBonge, who will be leaving office at the end of June, said it is important the garden is recognized and honored.

"I wanted to make sure it got the recognition. In high school when I would take my dates to the garden, we would meet [Orgolini]. He'd reach out and kiss them right on top of the hand on the mountain," LaBonge said.

Many hikers including Brian Knafou take

advantage of living near Griffith Park.

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"I really like it. I'm supportive of Dante's View being recognized as a historic-cultural monument. It's serene, relaxing and enjoyable. During summer, I try to come out here more often," Knafo said.

For 14 years, Orgolini maintained the garden until his death in 1978.

Orgolini was a Brazilian journalist and artist. In 1926, he moved to the U.S. to pursue a degree in art at Boston University. Initially, he had planned on returning to Brazil after graduating from college. However, he was commissioned to complete a set of murals at the Santa Barbara Courthouse in California with three other muralists.

It was during his trip to California in the 1930s that Orgolini was inspired to stay in the U.S. He worked for the Brazilian-based A Noite newspaper covering Hollywood's movie industry.

Orgolini settled in Los Feliz with his family where he discovered Griffith Park. Helped by fellow hikers and park rangers, Orgolini carved out the garden.

"Just this past April, we honored his family and the garden. There are a number of historic monuments in the park and Dante's View should be one of them," LaBonge said. "I think it deserves recognition. It's a great story, and the most important part was that he was an immigrant."

Dante Orgolini's son, Arnold Orgolini, was pleased to know that his father's garden will be recognized as an historic-cultural monument.

"A lot of immigrants at that time loved going up to the mountains to hike. My father made that accessible. He had a wonderful ability to welcome people when they would come up," Orgolini said.

Orgolini and his family still visit Dante's View, where they spend a couple of hours enjoying the view over Los Angeles and the garden.

Although Griffith Park is already designated as an historic-cultural monument, several sites within the park are also recognized, such as the observatory, the Los Angeles Zoo and the Gabrielino Indian Site. Dante's View will be Griffith Park's newest addition to the historic-cultural monument list.

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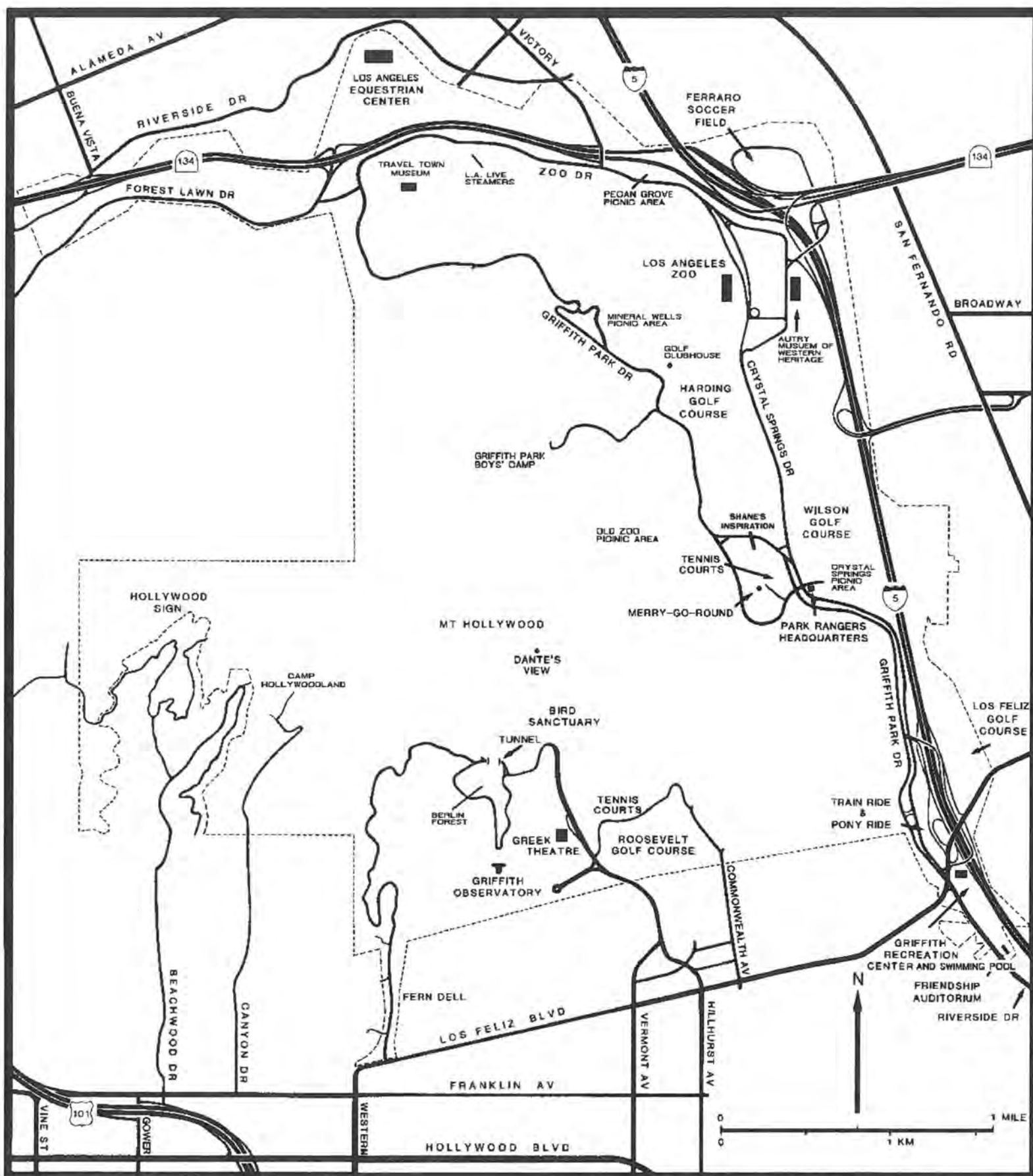
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