



Shakespeare Garden Fact Sheet

Overview

Conceived by Homer D. Crotty, former Chairman of the Board of Trustees, to display those plants which figure prominently in the writings of Shakespeare, this garden provides a unique opportunity to unify two of The Huntington's major themes: plants and literature. Quotes from Shakespeare mentioning specific plants are placed on signs throughout the garden.

History

Landscape Architect Ralph Cornell designed the original garden in a formal style in 1959. Early on it was discovered that many of the selected plants only bloomed in the cool part of the Southern California year so it was decided to expand the collection allowing some non-Shakespearian plants into the garden, and complementing the Library's fine collection of early Herbals. In 1982 the garden underwent a major redesign by Landscape Architect Ann Christoph to accommodate the new Scott Gallery. The new design is naturalistic, meant to evoke the English countryside with a swale, meadow, and surrounding forest.

Landscape

The original layout of the garden conformed to the existing level topography of the site. Two pergolas marked the entrance and exit of the garden. The 1982 redesign included grading to create the swales that are such a prominent feature of the current garden. The stone bridge was also added.

- The bust of William Shakespeare commemorates this remarkable man who wrote 37 plays and 154 sonnets, two narrative poems, and some shorter verses.
- The flag pole is a single trunk of DOUGLAS FIR brought to Southern California in 1909 by sailing ship and carted to the present site on horse drawn wagons. It is 132' above ground with 16' below ground.

Collections

- TALL POMEGRANATE (*Punica granatum*) is mentioned in *Romeo and Juliet*.
- CHINOTTO ORANGE (*Citrus aurantium*) is mentioned in *Much Ado About Nothing*.
- ENGLISH OAK (*Quercus robur*) figures prominently in many of Shakespeare's plays and is the oak of Sherwood Forest in the Robin Hood story.
- The 'APOTHECARY ROSE', the RED ROSE OF LANCASTER and the WHITE ROSE OF YORK, 'Alba semi-plena', are from a scene in *Henry VI*.
- Ophelia in *Hamlet* mentions ROSEMARY (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) for 'remembrance'.
- PRIMROSE and COWSLIP are common wildflowers of the English countryside and are mentioned in *Mid Summer Night's Dream*.

Programs

- Volunteers assist with planting, propagation, and pruning.