



# OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE No. 13

WINTER 1996



PHOTO BY BRUCE CARROLL

The Franklin Avenue Median on its first year anniversary of landscaping by the Franklin Hills Residents Association

## D-DAY FOR OUR SHAKESPEARE BRIDGE

By Bruce Carroll

We all learned as kids that London Bridge was forever falling down. City engineers have determined that the same fate could befall our Shakespeare Bridge. But fear not, hopefully before that happens, the City will close it and fix it.

See **BRIDGE**, p. 8

## WE FINALLY DID IT!

By Melinda Taylor  
Landscape Designer

In 1990 members of the Franklin Hills Residents Association agreed that the median's asphalt covered slope just west of the Shakespeare Bridge, had a visually degrading effect on the bridge, and recognized what a positive influence a well-landscaped median could be. For five years FHRA members developed plans, obtained permits, solicited grants, gathered donations, and negotiated the labyrinthine maze of agencies at City Hall, and on November 11th, 1995, neighbors and community joined together to plant and celebrate the median's transformation.

Many of the people who participated in the celebration planted trees or shrubs in memory of someone particular. One individual, Armida Bolton, gave a generous donation to the project in memory of her late husband Donald, who had a special appreciation for Southern California and for the Franklin Hills. For others the act of planting was a more general way of caring for and participating in the neighborhood. Many of those who turned out last November to plant have returned to the median for the maintenance days scheduled occasionally throughout the past year, tending the plants they personally put in the ground.

See **MEDIAN**, page 9

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Two years ago, I was asked to take the administrative helm of the Franklin Hills Residents Association as its President. Aside from some positions during my school years, I had never been saddled with such an important and complex responsibility. The job has provided some growing pains (and bruises), but not without a great sense of happiness and personal growth.

Over the last two years, FHRA accomplished a number of goals. As President, it has been my goal to focus on each project and systematically move it towards completion. This has meant a great number of hours in small work groups, piecing over details, drinking a few bottles of beer, and bringing residents together towards a common goal: improvement of our neighborhood.

The results are printed in this Overview and can be seen in the neighborhood: the Franklin Hills Median, our 501(c) (3) tax deduction status, improved communication with police and city officials, improved membership and fund raising, public stairs cleaning and reconstruction, two end-of-summer festivals, and The Overview, to name a few. Most important, is that Franklin Hills has emerged as a unique and special neighborhood in Los Angeles. It is no surprise that each month, the hot line gets calls from people wanting to live in Franklin Hills.

With the long list of FHRA's accomplishments, we can not ignore a growing problem: our declining volunteer base. With a governing board of eleven, FHRA's working groups typically consist of a subgroup of board members. A few non-board members have worked a great deal, however, this phenomenon is the exception rather than the rule. A common post-event comment has been: "Sure the board members were there, but what about the rest of our residents?" Residents have made suggestions to improve our neighborhood, but they often disappear into the hills when it comes down to implementation. The ideas often are left on the board's table, simply because there are not enough volunteers to handle the present work load.

In the last decade, citizens have been torn between their vocation and community service. Often times, it become a pragmatic choice based upon time. Many ask, "What's in it for me? What will I gain from my volunteer work?" Community service is not for profit, but an individual process of self-understanding. This comes through applying one self within a social network. For FHRA, the network is made of your own neighbors. In sum, community involvement is really a mystery, in which you will not know the outcome until you begin the adventure. As President, I invite the residents of Franklin Hills to approach the mystery with excitement and begin the adventure through FHRA.

Have a happy and productive new year

Adam Weisman  
President

**FRANKLIN HILLS  
RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION  
HOTLINE (213) 664-7247**

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The Franklin Hills OVERVIEW is published as often as possible. We invite your comments on matters relating to articles and the community and, space permitting, we will publish letters mailed to *Editor, OVERVIEW, Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90027*

# OUR LIBRARY IS ON ITS WAY

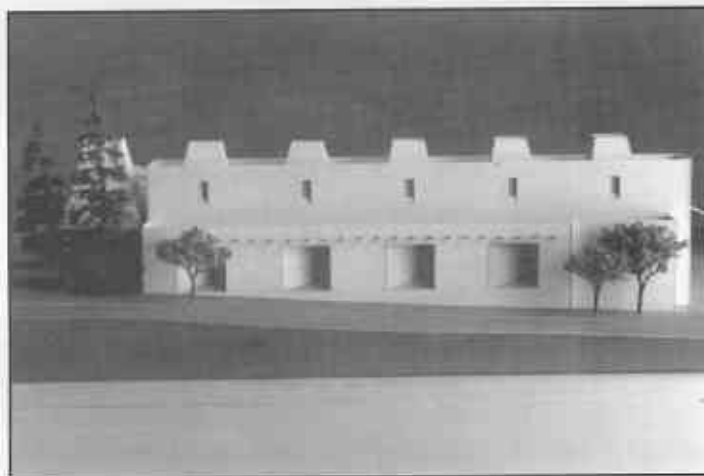
by Carol Skinner

The Northridge earthquake had a strange assortment of long-term impacts on our hill. Surely we all remember the months in which there was a dumpster and a pile of bricks at every third house. And who can ever forget FEMA? And, the departure of our Los Feliz Branch Library from the dark, grungy, incredibly crowded storefront which it had occupied for so long.

The bad news was that we were without a library for months. The good news is that the library reopened in a *much* nicer storefront. I haven't felt the need to take a flashlight back into the stacks since. Space for children's circles, space for magazine readers, tables and chairs—no more homework circles in the alley.

The photocopier works. If you read the article in *The Los Angeles Times Magazine* a month or so ago, you must have noticed that the reporter was impressed at how well a library *can* function in a storefront.

There is a row of computers on one side. One can access on-line information about holdings from the entire LAPL, and request an inter-library loan from the branch which has the desired



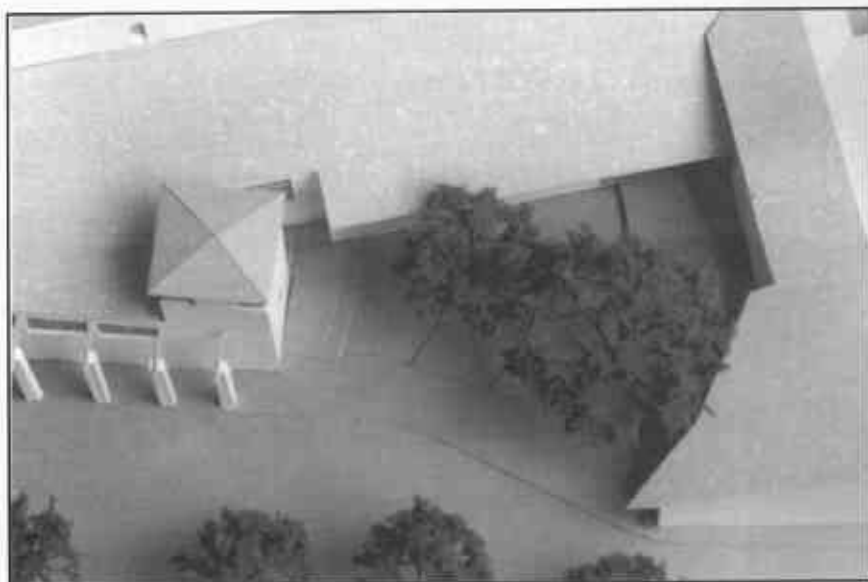
book. And, a picture behind the charge desk of the new library building, as it will be. The best news is that we will at last have a real library building. Friends of the Library committees have been working on fundraising plans to add even more features—and we expect to see every hill dweller make whatever contribution you can.

Peter Mann, the senior librarian was asked about the immediate future of the project:

"Library construction plans are pretty much complete. Very minimal changes will be made to meet the *Americans with Disabilities Act* requirements. Ground breaking will probably begin in January or February of 1997; possibly even in December of this year. Construction is usually about 18 months, could be as much as 24 months if unforeseen problems develop. I have the utmost confidence that due to the diligence with which things were done initially, the whole project should go along quite nicely.

"The new building will be mostly as described in previous publications, incorporating Mediterranean, Spanish revival and Southwestern styles. It will include a story telling tower, a bookstore, a community meeting room and

See LIBRARY, p. 7



# DWP COVER-UP FOLLOWS MAYVIEW RESIDENTS' COMPLAINTS

by Bruce Carroll

Anyone who's been on Mayview Drive recently has surely wondered why the driveways were littered with asphalt, and the curbs lined with temporary water mains...and your street could be next. The answer is simple according to the DWP's Fernando Cano. "Basically what it is, is you have a bunch of tuberculation in the pipe there." In non-engineer speak that's rust and corrosion. In neighborhood speak that's dirty water. And a lot Mayview residents have been speaking to the DWP. "We were really deluged with water quality complaints."

While there are long range plans to replace the mains, which are up to 73 years old, the DWP showed it listens and is the kind of old bird that has ears and a heart, as well as its familiar bill. According to project engineer Cano, "it might take us a number of years to get up there and install some new lines so we didn't want the residents to have to put up with dirty water for another five years."

The DWP's solution is to force scrapers and squeegees through the clogged 4 and 8 inch pipes. When they are clean, a 3/16 inch coating of cement is cleverly sprayed on the inside. Cano explained that



It's a messy job but . . . David Trujillo prepares the cement spraying nozzle and spring loaded trowel to be pulled through the 8" water main under Mayview Drive



while the cement cover-up doesn't prevent water from getting to the pipe walls, the alkalinity of the cement inhibits further corrosion. "We figure on extending the life of the existing mains for 50 to 60 years."

While Mayview residents have griped about inconveniences during the project, which was a last minute addition to work in Silver Lake, Cano pointed out, "It inconveniences the residents quite a bit more to put a new line in." It also inconveniences the DWP's pocketbook since cementing runs about \$30 per foot compared to \$100 for new pipes.

The Mayview project coated about 1,500 feet of pipe. A 12 mile cementing project including: Franklin, Lyric, Ronda Vista, Tracy, Hyperion, Prospect, Talmadge, Fountain, and other streets too numerous to mention, is on the drawing board for May, 1999. But Cano, after what he's seen from the current work, hopes to start sooner. "There seems to be very serious water quality problems that should be addressed as soon as possible. That's why I'll be recommending that they try to move that up."

What can we do in the meantime, other than hope the markets don't run out of bottled water...follow the example of Mayviewites who proved that just as "the squeaking wheel gets the grease"...the squawking residents get the clean water.

# • community phones •

## IMPORTANT COMMUNITY PHONE NUMBERS

- ABANDONED VEHICLES:** (800) 222-6366
- ABC-TELEVISION:**  
Security: (310) 557-5354.
- CITY ANIMAL REGULATION:** (213) 222-7138
- COUNCILMAN JOHN FERRARO, 4th District-**  
(213) 485-3337  
Room M-30, City Hall, 200 Spring St., L.A. 90012
- DEPT. OF ANIMAL REGULATION:** (213)485-5761  
Barking Dogs: 222-7138 or 731-8281
- ENVIRONMENTAL:**  
Recycling: (800)-CITYSAN  
Rebate for Ultra Low Flush Toilet installation.  
(213) 481-5800; (800) 722-1122  
Rebate for Super Efficient Gas Water Heater.  
(800) 852-9820  
Hazardous Waste Hotline (213) 237-1634  
Operation Clean Sweep (213) 237-1797
- FIRE DEPARTMENT: Emergency 911;**  
Non-emergency: 485-6235.
- GRAFFITI :**  
LAPD-NE Graffiti Cleanup (213) 237-0511  
Graffiti Hotline: (213) 485-0511
- HOMELESS, Food and Shelter (213) 974-1234
- LOS FELIZ PUBLIC LIBRARY:** (213) 664-2903.  
DUE TO REOPEN IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH
- PARKING ENFORCEMENT:** (818) 904-1418
- POLICE: 911; Spanish: 485-4333; Asian: 893-8100**  
Northeast Division, 3353 San Fernando Road, LA 90065:  
Main Desk (213) 485-2563  
Community Relations: (213) 485-2548  
Sr. Lead Officer Richard Kanzaki: 847-3138  
Sr. Lead Officer Sam Salazar: 847-3135
- RAPE HOTLINE** (213) 392-8381
- RECYCLING INFO:** (800) 773-2489
- SANITATION:** (213) 485-4906
- STREET LIGHTING:** (800) 303-5267 or 485-3461
- STREET MAINTENANCE:** (213) 485-5661
- SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE:** (213) 381-5111
- TELECOMMUNICATIONS:** (TV Cable) 485-2751
- TRASH RECEPTACLE INFO:** (800) 248-9726
- TREE TRIMMING (Hazards)** 485-5661
- WATER & POWER:** (800) 722-1122

## FRANKLIN FOTOS

As you have no doubt noticed, the editor of the Overview has an affinity for photographs taken in the early years of the Franklin Hills, Los Feliz and Silver Lake areas. We are trying to assemble a pictorial history of our district and would like to hear from anyone with such photos. If you grew up here, or if your parents built a house here, or if you inherited some photographs, please give us a call on the Hotline or send them to our mailbox.

We guarantee they will be handled very carefully while we have a copy negative made. The originals will be returned to you in their original condition. Look for your old photographs and give us a call!

## Disaster Preparedness

**FHRA Disaster Preparedness needs to know about the trained professionals living in our area. There is a clear need for doctors, nurses & trained emergency personnel in a disaster. If you are willing to assist in such an event, please contact the Hotline: 664-7247**

## Please Patronize "Our" Advertisers

Traveling to other areas to shop is troublesome now that the population and traffic have increased so much.

The businesses that are advertising in this newsletter are charged the absolute minimum possible advertising fees. Their ads pay for the paper and any surplus supports FHRA on-going projects.

**Please support our advertisers and Tell them you saw their ads in the "Overview."**

## DOES GRAFFITI BUG YOU?

FHRA NEEDS YOUR HELP in fighting graffiti in our area. We need someone to organize paint outs and people to work. We provide all materials. Call the Hotline to volunteer. 664-7247



## MY VIEW

by Bruce Carroll

# THE FRANKLIN HILLS CONSPIRACY

Whatever explanations you might have heard or read for the mysterious two year disappearance of the Franklin Hills Overview...there was a rumor it was caused by the last issue's article on the "Curse of Los Feliz...it's all bunk. For the first time here, I am able to reveal that it was the result of a sinister plot to destroy the media by proving true the old cliché..."no news is good news."

Researchers from TLC, a think-tank whose initials stand for Twisted Logic Corporation, devised a plan to demonstrate that things would really be better in the world if there was no news. With a limited budget, they had to focus on a small area. Late in 1994, after studying all their options, they picked the Franklin Hills because of the fine reputation of the Overview.

If they could show this newspaper held back progress, their theory would be proven. Virtually every Overview issue trumpeted plans to landscape the median, but all we saw were the weeds and graffiti. There was always an article about getting a new library, but in 1994 even our old library had closed. The Overview reported on measures to mitigate crime and prepare for disasters...but crime continued, and we had a big earthquake. Researchers reasoned if they could muzzle the Overview for two years and point to positive results it would not be long before the world would be clamoring for every newspaper, magazine, and broadcast station to shut-up.

While rummaging through yellow recycle bins, I found a first draft of their yet to be released report.

Despite my 35 years in journalism, I must confess they make a very convincing case. With the Overview snuffed-out, Franklin Hills residents have finally landscaped the median. The study also points out that the library is open again and now has Internet access. And at long last, land for a brand new Los Feliz Branch Library has been cleared. There have been no damaging earthquakes here since publication ceased.

But above all, the most unforgivable crime ever reported in the Overview...the theft in April 1994 of my classic 1972 Buick Skylark convertible...was solved. The car, repainted and turned into an Oldsmobile, was recovered in 1995 by very thorough Fontana police. We recently celebrated our 25th anniversary together...the car, not the cops.

While the researchers make a good case for their interpretation of the proposition that "no news is good news," even pointing out that taxes have been lowered because donations to the FHRA are now tax deductible, they conveniently ignore all the good things that FHRA has done, and reported in past issues of the Overview: The Adopt-a-Stair cleanup program, tree planting along Talmadge and Prospect, graffiti abatement, extra "Stop" signs at Franklin and St. George, and many others. But the biggest plus is the sense of community that the Overview itself has engendered.

Let's all work to keep the presses running. By including the Overview and FHRA in your holiday prayers, toasts and maybe even checks, Let's see if we can all help make this a better world...starting right at home.

hopefully, we will be as automated as possible. We would like to be one of the "virtual" libraries: the LUMMIS (Libraries Ultimate Method of Managing Information System), offering such products as a health reference center, full text periodical index, L.A. Times index, Power Pages, and many other things."

Bruce Carroll, our community representative for the Internet, had this to say,

"The Library is a great place to take a test drive on the information super highway. . .if you get lost or crash there is help nearby and it's toll free.

"Having the internet access really expands the Los Feliz Branch Library into a world wide resource. You can research. . .and find. . .everything from a job in Hollywood to 12,848 documents on cancer, to the latest jokes in Armenia.

"Since we only have one internet computer. . .donations of equipment or money are welcome. . .there is a daily sign up sheet where you can reserve your half hour in cyberspace. If no one's waiting you can often keep on going for another half hour. And one thing it takes no time to find out... there should be a surgeon general's warning because surfin'-the-net can become addictive."

Peter concluded our conversation:

"The Internet will help with work and with homework, and provide amusement. Classes should begin in the near future. At the moment, we are providing access and learning a lot from the children. "

And as I looked across the library from the stacks to the roof of computers, sure enough, there was a very serious 10-year-old carefully helping a middle aged patron print out her finds. *Cherchez les kids! Et vive la bibliotheque!*



Buy both or choose your favorite. Get the classic Franklin Hills logo shirt with the Shakespeare Bridge 2-color design printed in teal and purple. There's also the Franklin Hills End Of Summer Festival design printed in white on either a peacock blue or purple shirt. All are heavy-duty 100% cotton. Designed and illustrated by Eugene Cheltenham.

*All proceeds from the sale of the shirts go to help fund the Franklin Hills Residents Association's efforts to preserve and enhance our neighborhood.*

Franklin Hills End of Summer Festival  
Printed white on peacock blue or purple shirt

Choose from:  
- Peacock Blue  
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(BLUE) End Of Summer Festival	MED.	LG.	EX. LG.	
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ADDRESS _____ APT. _____				
CITY _____				
STATE _____ ZIP _____				
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FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION MEMBER?:				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

## REBIRTH OF NEW YET OLD INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORE IN LOS FELIZ VILLAGE

By Marcelle Zonta



It was a sad day for the independent Los Angeles reading public, when Chatterton's, one of the few independent bookstores in the area, closed down due to the death of William "Koki" Iwamoto who was the driving force behind Chatterton's.

As of November 1st, there has been a rebirth of Chatterton's in the form of a wonderful new bookstore called SKYLIGHT BOOKS. (Located in the same spot, at 1818 N. Vermont Avenue, south of Franklin, next to the Los Feliz Cinema and across from the Post Office). We visited the store while waiting for the theater to open up and found to our delight, that though things had changed slightly in the interior, which now supports a large and wonderful tree in the middle, there are still spaces for sitting and browsing.

Although, they are still adding more stock to their shelves, Skylight Books promises to be just as exciting as the old Chatterton's, and quite clearly is leaning in the

direction of the "alternative" choices in books. Skylight is not attempting to be another Chatterton's but it is building on that foundation of the independent bookstore and will no doubt turn out to be just what we in the area have been hoping for.

Like Chatterton's before them, the new owners hope the store will become a real community gather-

ing place and a place of creativity, with "works in progress" performances, author visits and readings, political and community discussions etc.

By the time you read this, the Grand Opening will already have taken place during the Thanksgiving weekend. But the exciting plans include the following: Nancy Cartwright, the voice of Bart Simpson, will read children's stories, local poet Wanda Coleman will read from her latest work, "Native Daughter." James Ragan, a professor with USC's writing program, will also be reading some of his own works. There are also hints of surprise guests who will be reading from select authors associated with Los Angeles, like Raymond Chandler, Nathaniel West and Charles Bukowski.

So if you've a few minutes or more to spare, look in on the SKYLIGHT bookstore. I know you will be most pleasantly surprised. See you there.

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film and theatre • children's books*

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1818 N. Vermont in Los Feliz Village



**MEDIAN** from p. 1

The median planting is now one year old, and as we celebrate its first birthday we have good reason to be proud—it is growing well, its structure is developing its beauty is apparent. It survived a year without suffering vandalism or theft of any kind; it weathered the rain of its first winter without eroding or sliding into the roadway. Its irrigation system works well, all small bugs and glitches rectified. Its plaque commemorating Donald Bolton is in place.

In the next year we can look forward to its continued growth, and its increasing drought-tolerance and hardiness as plants become established on the site. We can expect to enjoy more flowers this coming year, as plants mature, and less weeding, as they fill in the bare areas of ground around them. In short, we can look forward to the median becoming more beautiful this year, and every year following, as plants become established and develop into their mature forms.

### **Some Background Notes on the Franklin Avenue Median Design Intent**

The Franklin Avenue Median is designed to visually reflect its particular location in the Los Feliz/ Franklin Hills area of Los Angeles, California. It contains many plants native to hillside areas of Southern California, plants which can be found growing naturally in the hills of Griffith Park and the lower areas of the San Gabriel Mountains. It also contains plants growing in the front gardens of houses on either side of Franklin Avenue. If you look closely you'll see purple lantana, for example, growing on the median just across the roadway from where it covers a neighbor's front yard slope.

Plants have been selected and placed on the median to bloom in succession, with the furthest reaches of the project area blooming in fall and winter, and the mid-sections providing spring and summer bloom.

**BRIDGE**, from p. 1

Starting on the 53rd anniversary of D-Day...June 6th...for you historically challenged folks...an army of workers will take the bridge out of action and begin extensive earthquake strengthening. According to project engineer Raffi Massaloki the really noisy part of demolition won't begin until June 23, 1997. The date was chosen to ease the potential for aching eardrums, and strained teacher tonsils at the LILA school just below the bridge. The school will be out for the summer.

By this time next year the bridge should be stronger than when it was new in 1926...and look even more like the original plan. City researchers found old plans showing eight lamp-posts instead of the current four. For Franklin Hills residents who'd like to have a challenging job near home, the City's request for bids on the project goes out January 9, 1997. Bridgework anyone?

In these ways the landscape design acts as a locator of sorts. It is a landmark for the Franklin Hills and Los Feliz area, it acknowledges its location in a residential neighborhood surrounded by residential landscape design, and it refers to its greater geographical location in Southern California in time.

### **Climate and Color in Southern California:**

Our Southern California climate of mild rainy winters and hot dry summers is described as a Mediterranean one. We have a dry season from May to October and a distinct rainy one from November to April, but within our rainy season precipitation is erratic and unpredictable, and made more difficult to forecast by the recurrence of drought cycles that can last for many years in a row.

The plants that are adapted to our Mediterranean climate have evolved with a strong correlation to the availability of water. As a result, many of these plants have active growing and flowering cycles from mid winter to late spring, and become less active or dormant from summer through fall, as water supplies fail.

The quintessential look of California—the landscape of golden brown rolling hills dotted with dark green umbrellas of Live Oak trees and other trees and shrubs throwing their dark shadows on the ground—this is the look of a climate where perennials (grasses, in this case) go dormant in the summer in response to drought and shrubs and trees (such as the Oak) have tough, thick leaves which help them retain water until winter rains arrive again.

Driving North on the 5 freeway from Los Feliz Boulevard, we can see this dotted green-on-brown landscape covering the hills of Griffith Park through September and into October or November. If we look closely at the specific plants comprising this palette, we can see subtle variations in the colors of these plants, variations which are also responses to climate and available rainfall.

Some of the area's plants are succulents, such as the Agaves, which absorb moisture in their fleshy stems and leaves and resist drought with the use of their own internal water supply. Certain woody shrubs, such as *Eriogonum giganteum* and *Fremontodendron* have soft hairy coverings on their leaves which help to retain moisture and provide shade on the leaf surface. Other shrubs, such as *Salvia apiana*, have leaves that are gray or silver in color to reflect light. Many of the plants selected for the Median have one or more of these particular adaptations.

The color and textural adaptations of these Mediterranean plants is highly practical, but no more practical than beautiful. The brown and silver/gray foliage that is prevalent in many plants adapted to our Mediterranean climate gives this palette its wonderful smoky, shimmering quality. The deep green leather-leaved evergreens that do well next to them also look best next to them—dark green complements this gray/bronze palette.