**Historical Restoration of the USU Passive Recreation Garden**

Laval Morris was the founder of the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department at USU. He was an important figure in the history of our university by the state and international region. One of the first outstanding landscape plans he designed for the university was the USU’s Passive Recreation Garden.

Over time the garden has been degraded, created by previous plans and the last year has almost completely destroyed. It is important to preserve and retrain the garden because of its importance to Laval and USU’s history.

My thesis is a documentation of the garden’s importance and its history, from conception to its current degraded state and everything in between. I have tracked down the original planting plan for the site, old photographs, creating timelines and other correspondences and conducted interviews of people who knew Laval, the garden and what it meant to him. As part of my thesis, I have also developed restoration and creation plans. This paper is a brief summary of my complete honors thesis.

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**Original Garden Plan**

The Passive Recreation Garden was designed by Morris in the utilitarian, informal style. The garden was developed with basic flat plantings that were designed by Laval Morris from his personal collection. Hedges separate walks, sitting rocks and a beautiful water feature with a series of pools and waterfalls that obscured the overgrown area of Cache Valley.

The plan illustrated here is compiled from the original 1959 planting plan discovered during my research, and verified by period photography.

**Laval S. Morris**

Laval Morris founded the Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at USU in 1959 and taught for eleven chief’s century. He had a passion for horticulture and art. He not only taught students about Landscape Architecture but was active in the community, state and government. Upon his retirement, Laval Morris was dubbed “The Father of Landscape Architecture in Utah.” He taught intensive courses and did more to further the field of Landscape Architecture in the intermountain West than any other person.

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**The Garden is Finished**

These photos illustrate the garden slowly after completion. Students enjoyed going to the garden because it was the first place to walk up to in the spring. This is due to its south west orientation and because it is a warm area, it is isolated from wind.

The garden was supported by the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department as a teaching garden.

In the Falls of 1960 the Landscape Construction class helped put the Gardening to do the garden. It was used by the Plant Materials class for years because there were plants in the garden that weren’t found anywhere else on the campus.

The garden was to be a popular place for graduation and family photos not only because of its beauty, but also because of the panoramic view it offered on Cache Valley.

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**Years of Neglect**

According to the students and coworkers, Laval loved the garden and was careful in not using it as a teaching tool. They referred to it as a “Laval’s Bête.”

Following his retirement, the maintenance of the garden was done primarily by the LAAP department.

Wendell Mone, Landscape Architect with USU Facilities, taught the Plant Materials course in LAAP for 6 years.

When LAAP relinquished control of the garden, he took the new tasking responsibility and maintained it slowly for many years.

Following his retirement there was no longer a personal advocate for the garden and it started to slow decline.

Over the last twenty years the garden has become very overgrown. The once beautiful garden was all but hidden. Then in 2006, LAAP was approached by a group of students and community gardeners who were interested in maintaining the garden and its surrounding areas. This led to the creation of the Native Garden Study and Design Club.

Currently there is a renewed interest in the garden and it is now in the extension planning stage.

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**New Garden Plan**

The Passive Recreation Garden is going to be restored as a teaching demonstration garden. It will be planted with many different species of plants to be used in a display area. As shown below, the милёк primarily by native and ornamental plantings, next to the parking garage will have 200 plants; the potting and growing exhibit of the perennial and annual garden exhibit, the rest will be offered as a small grass demonstration area and traditional exhibit along most of the garden paths will be used to native planting exhibit. The garden will also be used as a teaching tool for students. This is what Laval originally used it for and it will continue to be used for that purpose.

**Garden Cleanup**

On Wednesday, May 12, 2004 volunteers came out to clean up the garden for Laval’s garden. Over the course of the day, we were able to complete a large amount of work in the garden. The garden is now becoming a beautiful place.

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**Sprouting seeds of service**

On December 22nd 2009 a volunteer crew of over 50 members participated in a cleanup activity of Laval’s garden. Over the course of 3 hours, we were able to complete a large amount of work in the garden. The garden is now becoming a beautiful place.

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**Article from Student Newspaper During Construction**

**SEPT. 14, 1961**

Passive Recreation Garden is completed

**1959**

President Deryl Chinn commissions Laval Morris to design the garden.

**1965**

Laval Morris retire and garden stops being maintained by LAAP

**1970**

1973

LAAP service activity for LAAP Week (sic garden cleanup)

**1980**

Gradual Decline of Garden

**1990**

2000

**2004**

LLC construction begins the irrigation water lines are cut. This is the last time the garden has had supplementary water.

**2009**

Invasive Species Volunteer Cleanup lead by Joe Woodard and Arthury Ben Harris.

The garden was overgrown with Siberian Elm trees. The volunteer group spent most of the summer clearing them out.

**2010**

SUMMER 2009

On Monday, July 22, 2004 volunteers came out to clean up the garden for Laval’s garden. Over the course of 3 hours, we were able to complete a large amount of work in the garden. The garden is now becoming a beautiful place.