Live Music
Refreshments
Entertainment

ROBINSON JEFFERS
GARDEN PARTY
SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2023
2-5 PM

Explore & Photograph
Jeffers’ Hand-built Home,
Hawk Tower & Gardens
26304 Ocean View Ave
Carmel CA 831.624.1813
General Admission $25
Student Admission $10
Please No children under 10

Illustration by Deborah Russell at www.PeridotFineArt.com
**Updates from the Foundation President**

**Monterey County Gives!** In last year’s MCGives! fundraising campaign which ended on December 31, 2022, ninety-seven donors contributed $32,501 to the Foundation. $13,000 came as a matching grant from the Foundation’s Trustees. Donations varied from $4,000 to $5. Added to this was an overall match to the campaign from the Community Foundation for Monterey County of 11.2% or $3,641.69. A fee of 3.02% or $982.17 for administrative expenses was charged on total gifts. The total raised was $35,160.52.

I want to thank the Tor House community for your generous support, a community which reaches far beyond Monterey County. While there were donors from Aromas, Carmel, Carmel Valley, Del Rey Oaks, Monterey, Pacific Grove and Seaside, there were also donors from elsewhere in California and beyond.

We received donations from Tor House community members living in Bolinas, Chico, Lockwood, Los Angeles, Los Altos, Mountain View, Napa, Oakland, Palo Alto, Running Springs, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Cruz, Santa Monica, Sherman Oaks, Stanford and Woodside. And from those living in Bainbridge Island, WA, Bend, OR, McLean, VA, Minneapolis, MN, Roseberg, OR, Tenafly, N.J., Trinity, FL, and Winchester, VA.

Many thanks also to the three sponsors of MCGives! -- The Community Foundation for Monterey County, the Monterey County Weekly and the Monterey Peninsula Foundation -- and their staff members who provided incredible support.

**End-of-the-Year Donations:** While the MCGives fundraising campaign has formally replaced our annual end-of-the-year fundraising drive, a number of community members made significant and much appreciated end-of-the-year donations: $2,000 in support of the music program and for maintenance of the 1904 Steinway Model O Grand Piano; $6,500 for maintenance of the gardens; and $500 in support of the Prize for Poetry, a total of $9,000.

On behalf of the Foundation’s Board of Trustees, I want to express our profound gratitude for the support we received during this fund-raising period. We are also deeply indebted to those others who support the Foundation through your membership dues and through donations made during the year. Because of your support, we are able to fulfill our mission, most importantly, the preservation of Tor House and Hawk Tower and their collections, a responsibility severely tested these past few months.

**Winter Storms:** When Robinson Jeffers planted some 2,000 cypress and eucalyptus trees on the property, he probably did not think what effect storms a hundred years later would have on the property. Yes, “fire and the axe are devils,” he commented in the poem “Tor House,” lamenting their eventual loss; and, yes, the “coast cypress” would be “haggard/With storm drift,” but he did not talk about limbs the size of small trees being torn from the trunks by eighty-mile-an-hour winds or whole trees being uprooted.

Fortunately, this series of winter storms had only torn limbs at Tor House, not uprooted trees as happened at the entrance to Point Lobos State Reserve down the coast. Fortunately, the heaviest of the limbs either fell on the driveway or against Hawk Tower.

What was it Jeffers wrote about the Tower? “I built it well/Thick walls and Portland cement and grey granite.” That, and the sage advice and expert work of the tree trimming crew, limited damage primarily to some of the wooden fences. The crew spent hours trimming the massive eucalyptus that stands just feet from the East Wing and the cypresses throughout the property. The cost of this tree work was significant.
One Saturday, several of our intrepid docents cleared the driveway so guests could come on tours; another time, a THF Fellow, working on site, had to clear the platform on the third level of the Tower from snapped off cypress limbs. Another docent cleared the drains of the Tower’s gargoyles, clogged by the needle-like foliage of the cypress, to keep the platform and turret floors of the Tower from flooding.

The only damage to the Tower was minor but significant from a historical perspective. High on the chimney at the southeast corner of the platform was a small, round ceramic piece, held in place by a bolt screwed into one of the granite rocks. When one of the limbs fell on the Tower, it sheared the ceramic piece and the bolt off. I found the rusted bolt, bent out of shape, and a portion of the ceramic piece. If one looks carefully, one can see that the rock on the chimney has a small part chipped off.

For years, I looked at that ceramic piece and wondered about its provenance. The ceramic piece was like the ones used to hold electric wires in place…but there has never been electricity in Hawk Tower.

One day I remembered that Jeffers had a short-wave radio during World War II so he could get news. “This morning Hitler spoke in Danzig, we heard his voice,” Jeffers writes in “The Day Is a Poem (September 19, 1939).” I surmised that the wire antenna to the short-wave radio was held in place at the top of the Tower by this ceramic piece.

Looking Ahead: I hope this series of atmospheric rivers is finished for the season. Tor House gardens will be filled with flowers for the Garden Party. I hope you will be able to join us for this annual event when we gather to celebrate all the gifts we have been given: Tor House and Hawk Tower, Jeffers’s poetry, wonderful music, good food and the community which sustains.

- Elliot Ruchowitz-Roberts

Robinson Jeffers Tor House
2023 Garden Party
A Celebration of Spring and the Arts

Sunday, May 7, 2-5 p.m.
at Tor House, 26304 Ocean View Avenue

Admission: $25 adults $10 students Please no children under 10

Enjoy strolls in the gardens among spring flowers, poetry read by Tor House docents, walks through Tor House, climbing Hawk Tower, musical performances, a spinning demonstration, artists at work, fine food and drink.

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This year’s Garden Party will celebrate spring and the arts. Guests will be greeted by bagpiper Ed Jarvis playing tunes from the top of Hawk Tower and, during the course of the afternoon, will enjoy listening to Una Jeffers’ fully restored 1904 Steinway Model O Grand Piano played by Melinda Coffey Armstead and Barbara Rudzicka, and to the Celtic trio John Weed & Sons (Tyler and Evan). Artists from Monterey Bay Plein Air Painters Association will have plein air paintings of Tor House and Hawk Tower for sale, a percent of the sales going to Tor House. Santa Cruz weaver Kris Nardello will give a demonstration of spinning using the spinning wheel brought from County Down, Northern Ireland, by Una Jeffers’ grandmother, Elizabeth Donnan Lindsay, in 1841. Master printers Peter and Donna Thomas and artist Tom Killion will be present to celebrate their limited-edition broadside--hand-printed on hand-made paper--featuring Jeffers’ poem “the polar ice-caps” and Killion’s single block relief print of Hawk Tower. There will be a limited number of broadsides available for sale with all proceeds going to Tor House. There will be food and drink, with Sweet Elena’s Bakery providing tasty treats. Masks will be required while visiting indoors.
NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERSHIPS falling between December 2022 and March 2023.

LIFETIME
Gere DiZerega

PATRON MEMBERSHIPS
Dominick & Evelyn Maio
Alan Stacy & Deborah Russell

SPONSOR MEMBERSHIPS
Janet Bohannon
Eric Bolt & Georgia Hughes
Douglas Ferguson/Nancie Brown
George Galakatos
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Albert & Barbara Gelpi
Christine Hunsley
Carolyn Kleefeld
Tracy Krauter
Ann McLaughlin
Robert & Diane Reid
Robert & Charlotte Sawyer
Peter & Michele Serchuk

INDIVIDUAL, COUPLE, SENIOR, STUDENT AND DOCENT MEMBERSHIPS
Robert & Melinda Armstead
John & June Armstrong
Barbara Babcock
Barbara Bullock-Wilson
Michael & Patricia Busk
Nancy Collins
Alan & Sherry Cosseboom
Dale Ditsler
Thomas Doerk
Michael & Ann Draper
Diana Dunn
Deanne Edwards
Carole Erickson
Jan C Fernandez
Charlotte Flanagan
Lynn Geison

Charles/Allison Hicks Greifenstein
Julius & Peggy Guccione
Bernice Hearn
Neale Inglenook
Lindsay Jeffers
Robert Keats
Frank Keith
Suzanne LaHaye
Edward Lesnick/Merilyn Ferrara
Gordon & Molly McCall
Tim & Kirststen McCarthy
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Joel Miller
Reb Monaco
Francis Olson

Vito & Deirdre Palmieri
Arthur Paull
Charles Rodewald
Rags Rosenberg
Lawrence Ruth
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Peggy Schmidt
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Maria Jose H. Spencer
Alan Stacy
Richard Stanley
Peter & Donna Thomas
Bradley J. Vogel
Carol Young
William & Jan Zeigler

[Please note, listings reflect only new and renewed memberships and contributions since the Winter Issue of the Newsletter. Generally, the Spring Issue lists memberships and contributions for December, January, February, and March. There are no listings in the Summer Issue because of space constraints (Poetry Prize winners are published in the Summer Issue). The Fall Issue contains memberships and contributions from April through September of any given year, and the Winter Issue lists October through November memberships and contributions.]
CONTRIBUTIONS (November 22, 2022– March 2023)

Monterey County Gives! Challenge Grant

$1000 to $5000
Captain V. J Huth
Jill Mancina
Gregory Schopen
John Varady

$100 to $999
Coral Amende
Alice Glenn
Norris & Janet Pope
Douglas Borer/Judith Stiles
Drew & Myra Goodman
Lee & Shirley Rosen
Sandie Borthwick/Gloria Souza
David & Susan Hafleigh
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Donald & Esther Goodhue
George Norton
Fran Vardamis

To $99
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Tom Haley
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Dave Awerbuck/Dave Holberg
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Carole Erickson
Richard Popchak
Barbara Bullock-Wilson
Leslie Foote
Michael & Mone Rubin
Larry Woodfill/Susan Raycraft
Mary Gale
Peter & Michele Serchuk

General Contributions

Contribution to Garden Fund ($7,500) Anonymous
Contribution to Music Program and Steinway Piano ($2,000) Paula Karman

General Contribution (to $500)
Michael & Ann Draper
Alice Phelan Sullivan corp.
Fran Vardamis to mailing supplies and postage.

General Contributions (to $100)
AmazonSmile
Francis Olson
Alan Stacy/Deborah Russell
Ben Boychuk
Pat Sanders
Carol Young
Frankie Del Papa
Darryl Siems
Medea in London

A major West End Event this winter was a new production of Jeffers’ adaptation of Medea. Lindsay Jeffers, Trustee Emeritus and grandson of Jeffers, was fortunate to attend a performance of this production much praised in the British Press. Lindsay’s description of the event follows. If you hurry, there is still time to book a flight.

On February 17, 2023, a production of Medea using Robinson Jeffers’ adaptation from Euripides opened in London’s West End in a brand-new theater, @SohoPlace, where the intimate 600 seat theater-in-the-round pulls the audience into the tragic circumstances of an abandoned and exiled wife and mother. Director Dominic Cooke employs a minimalist stage and Sophie Okonedo as Medea, Marion Bailey as the Nurse and three choral women seated in the audience generate both tension and intimacy as they work through the pain, indignity and anger elicited by the male characters, all played by Ben Daniels who paces around the stage in twilight insincerity when he is not expostulating as Jason or Creon, Aegeus or the Tutor.

Sophie Okonedo visually embodies the role of disliked foreigner, making clear how she looks down on the “chattering Greeks” as they look down upon her as “barbarian witch.” This tension works into the relationship between the female and male characters who casually fall into patriarchal stereotypes. In fact, Jeffers’ words are employed from time to time to elicit sympathetic laughter from the audience - perhaps welcome relief from the threatening conclusion.

Invited to attend the opening night with my sister Candy Jeffers and her daughter Tamar, I found the theater full of young and enthusiastic Londoners adding their sympathy and intensity to the experience. This seems to have been reflected in the widely positive reviews of the performance in London papers and even the New York Times. This production meets its audience on a serious but not overpowering level and provides 90 minutes of artistic entertainment. It will run through April 22.

Sophie Okonedo as the 21st Century’s Medea

Medea and Men

Thanks to Lindsay for reviewing the return of Jeffers’ adaptation of “Medea.” The first production of Jeffers’ adaptation opened on October 20, 1947 with Judith Anderson recreating the role. Brooks Atkinson of the NY Times noted, at the time, “As a modern-minded writer, Euripides would be the first to agree that after 2,378 years ‘Medea’ needs a little play-doctoring. Robinson Jeffers has performed that service with alacrity... his literary style is terse, idiomatic and sparing. The imagery is austere and brilliant.”
NEWS AND NOTES

Exciting news from docent, trustee and pianist Melinda Armstead who reports that: Monthly Musical Tours for up to 8 guests continue at Tor House this spring on Fridays April 14 and May 19. The cost per person is $25, masks are still required to be worn indoors. The two-hour long tour begins at 3:00 with a 60 minute tour of the garden, tower and cottage, then from 4:00 to 5:00 visitors enjoy a concert of the music played and sung at Tor House by Una Jeffers and her famous friends and visitors such as Ansel Adams, George Gershwin, Samuel Barber and Noel Sullivan. The tour team includes docents Inge Kessler and Alyssa Dougherty, who assist with check-in, a tour of the tower, occasional readings and bookstore sales. When the weather warms up and the tourists arrive, we will likely increase the musical tour frequency to twice a month. NEW: A new offering on the tour menu this spring are 90 minute private tours in Spanish, led by Melinda Armstead, and in German, led by Inge Kessler. These are by request for $25 a person, subject to the availability of Melinda and Inge, and include an hour-long tour plus a short concert in the cottage to conclude. Our first Spanish visitors (four retired academics from Alicante, España, who spoke no English) enjoyed this new tour on March 10.

Tom Rusert, Program Coordinator, besides scheduling successful school programs, reports: The Tor House Foundation recruiting program is pleased to welcome to its ranks three very talented tour docents. The initial training commitment typically spans 8-10 weeks. It includes extensive orientation, sample tours and books, access to the private docent library, ongoing mentoring and shadowing public tours with seasoned guides. A gift of a Tor House Membership and an opportunity to offer a unique complimentary private family and friends tour is the Foundations "thank you" gifts to new team members. Private rehearsal times at Tor House enriches the story and offer a uniquely tangible window into the Jeffers family experience. Our new docents are welcomed from a wide range of backgrounds, and each has the opportunity to craft their own customized storytelling experience.

* * * * *

THE LAST WORD FROM JEFFFERS

A taste of Medea: After Medea discovers her husband’s betrayal, the Women of Corinth, her "comforters," lament that "it is a bitter thing to be a woman.” Medea responds:

A woman is weak for warfare, she must use cunning. Men boast their battles: I tell you this, and we know it:

It is easier to stand in battle three times, in the front line, in the stabbing fury, than to bear one child.

And a woman, they say, can do no good but in childbirth. It may be so. She can do evil. She can do evil.


(The play is also available in various editions and formats on Amazon and elsewhere)
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Spring 2023

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Mail to: PO Box 2713, Carmel, CA 93921
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Your contribution assists in the preservation of the
unique home of the poet, Robinson Jeffers, and in
community outreach programs.

Membership benefits include:
* Free tours of Tor House
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