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AMBASSADOR COLLEGE Pasadena, Calif.

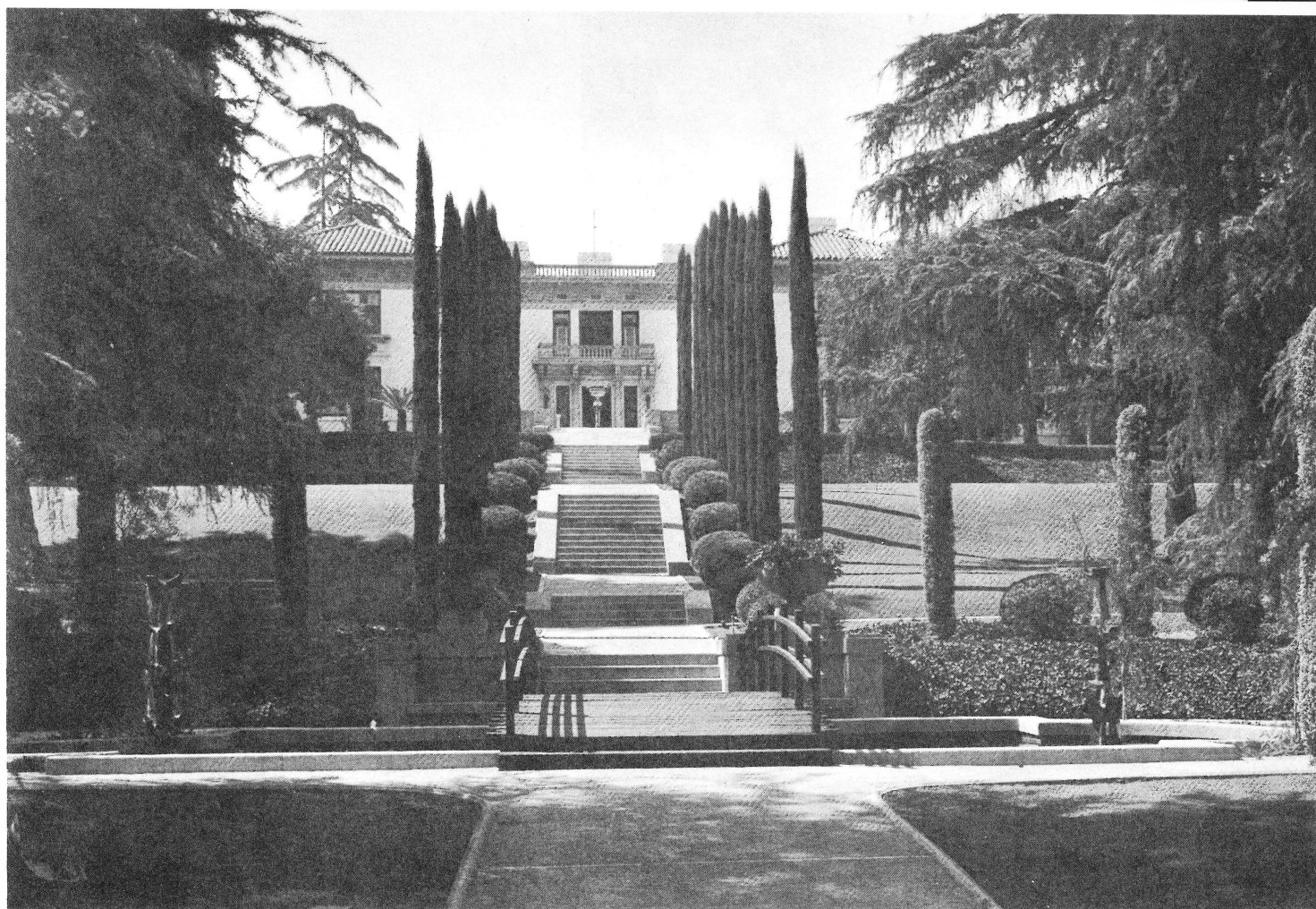
Orange Grove Avenue in Pasadena was once the center of wealth, ostentation, and high living. Now its fine large old homes, too expensive for contemporary incomes to maintain, are deteriorating and being replaced by "luxury" apartments of nondescript design. Ambassador College, a small institution of 400 students, is performing a cultural service by buying up these old homes and converting them to academic use. Six fine old homes of varying architectural character—Renaissance, Mediterranean, Tudor—have now been refurbished and placed under careful maintenance. Along with the rear blocks of cottages once inhabited by domestic help, a total superbloc of about 25 acres is gradually being assembled. The cottages will be replaced by new college buildings—auditorium, dining hall, administration center, gymnasium.

This unique college development poses site planning and landscape design problems of special interest. Large old gardens of individual character must be merged, connected, integrated, and redeveloped to campus scale and character. Fine specimen trees must be preserved; smaller plants salvaged and re-

used. Circulation patterns connecting principal buildings and functions must be developed. Detailed intimate spaces, serving more intensive uses than the buildings were originally designed for, must be developed.

Most highly developed of the original houses was the Merritt house, now called Ambassador Hall, converted to classrooms. Of Renaissance vintage, this property was surrounded by an enclosure of wrought-iron fencing and cast concrete urns and piers of magnificent scale and detail. To the west, the house fronted across an open lawn to a large formal sunken garden. This is being redeveloped with a long reflecting pool, beds of green and color, tall slender lemon gums giving a sense of height and space above the sunken level, and coniferous accents. Ultimately there will be a new and special sculptural fountain at the west end.

To the east the house looks down a terraced grassy slope, framed in tall deodars, and centering on a cypress allée leading down to the classical Renaissance pool. This pool had to be bridged to solve circulation problems. A hardwood bridge on curved



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1 Merritt house from the east about 1905.
2, 3 Ambassador Hall from the east today.

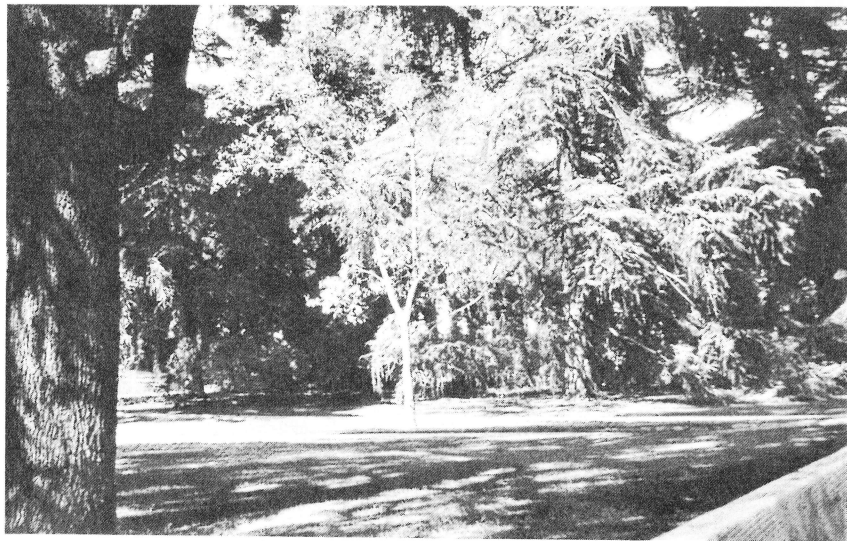
laminated beams, of slightly Oriental character, was designed and built. Two pieces of bronze sculpture, of abstract-organic form, have been installed at the centers of the semicircular ends. Although this mixing of forms may seem heretical, the designer is convinced that it produces an expanded richness, while clinging to conventionally compatible forms would have resulted in sterility. This feeling may be analogous to the mixing of modern and period furniture in some modern houses.

This former Merritt property forms the north end of the present campus. Along its southern boundary some portions of the enclosing structure had to be rearranged or removed in order to open it up to the balance of the campus. It was found possible to open up a basement swimming pool to a new sunken sunning patio by piercing the basement wall with double sliding doors (see page 76).

South of the eastern sloping half of the former Merritt property (now Ambassador Hall grounds) a long and elegant expanse of contoured and terraced lawn, studded with fine specimen trees, extends the length of a city block through the heart of the



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10 View from Terrace Drive northwest toward Ambassador Hall grounds.

11 View from Terrace Drive entrance toward main crossing.

12 Stream detail.

13 View from Terrace Drive toward main crossing and Ambassador Hall.

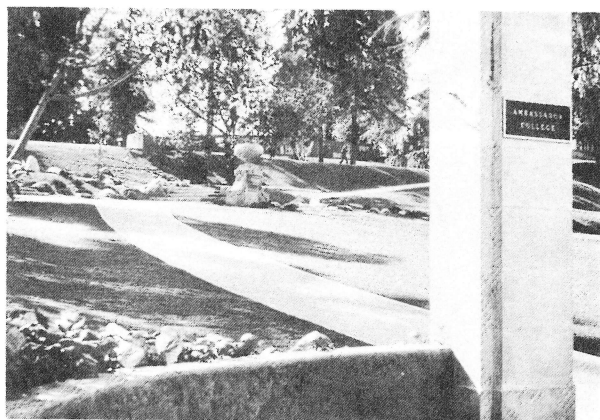
14 Main crossing.

15 Waterfall in stream near main crossing.

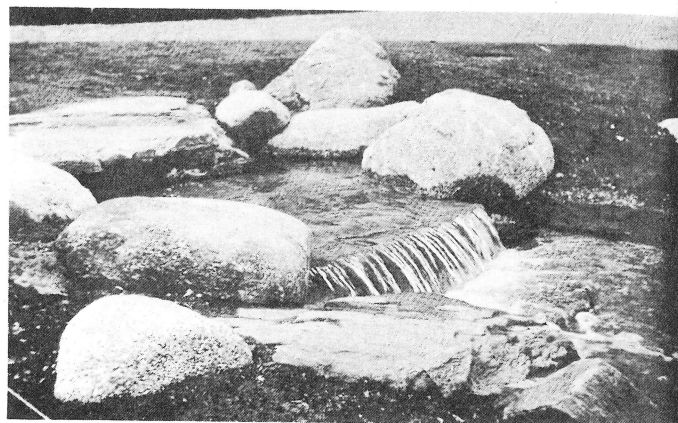
16 Waterfall under bridge.

17 View across stream at main crossing toward Terrace Drive.

18 Bridge across lower end of stream.



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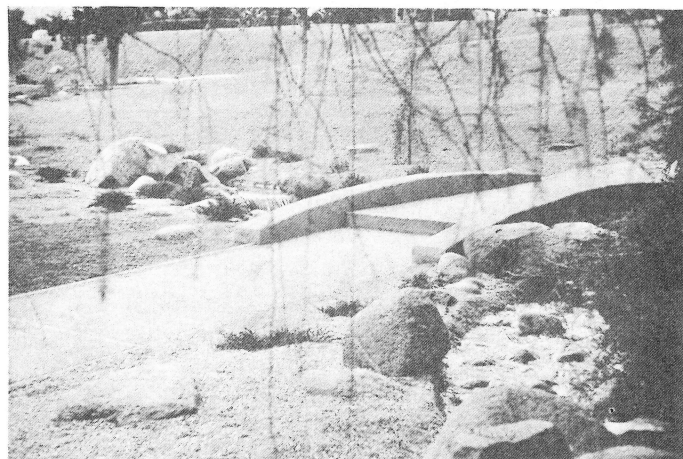
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19 View across lower end of stream toward pool patio enclosure.

20 View toward Mayfair up main path and stream from Terrace Drive entrance.

21 View upstream toward Mayfair.

present campus. Formed by the designed merging of five large old gardens, it forms a foreground for the redeveloped old houses, leading down to Terrace Drive, ultimately the main mall of the completed campus. Across this lawn diagonal paths have been carefully curved in a criss-cross pattern which carries the main campus foot traffic. Parallel to one path a stream with a cascade has been created which runs for several hundred feet. Channeled in granite boulders brought in from the nearby mountains, it originates as a spring in the highest group of rocks and follows a variable course ending in the aforementioned classical Renaissance pool. This stream is a central feature in the daily experience of most students and faculty, bringing coolness and sparkle to the hot, dry glare of southern California.

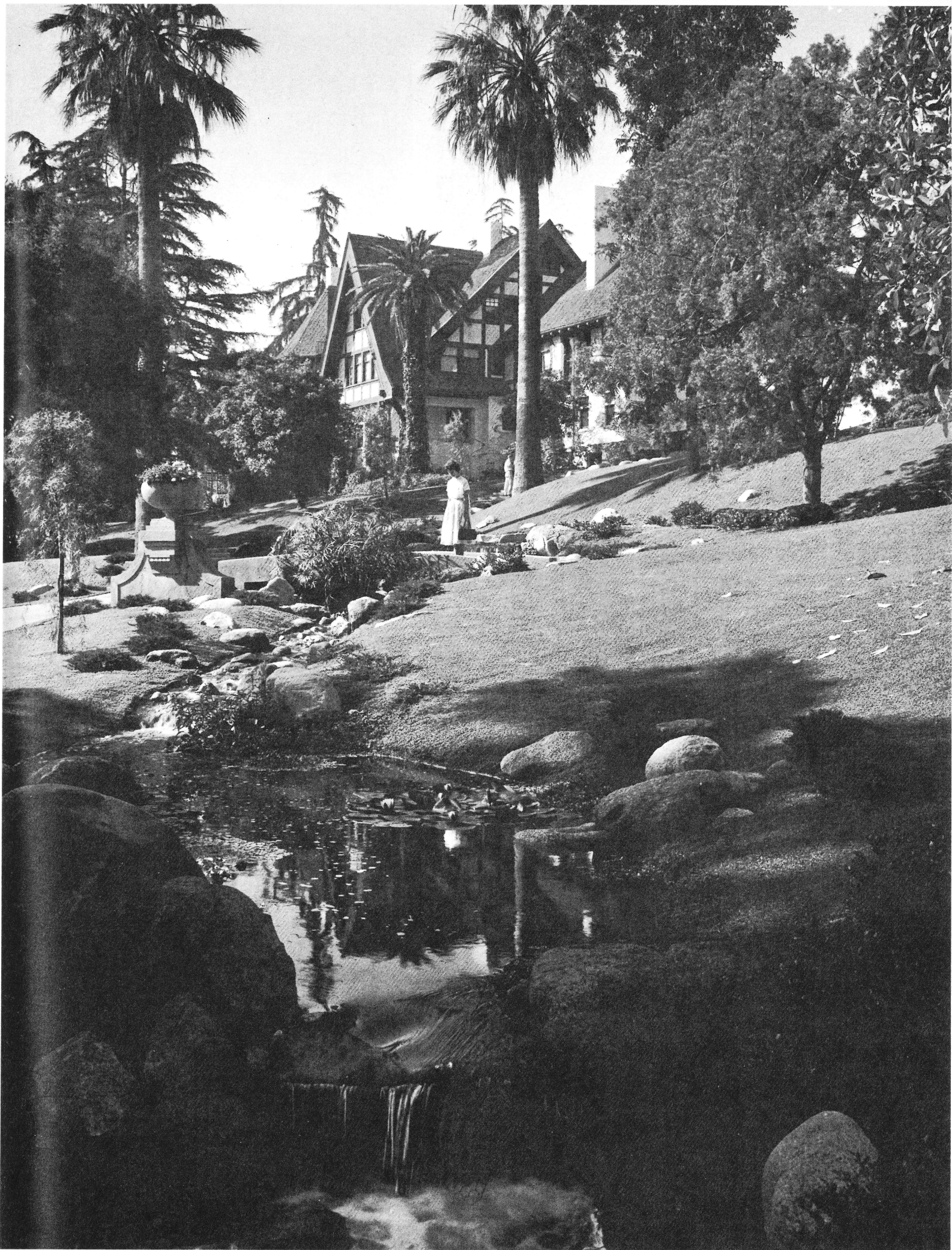
At the southern end of the campus, Del Mar Hall, a fine old Tudor mansion, has been remodeled as a men's dormitory. To the east a sloping lawn has been terraced to provide space for free play. To the west a long pergola has been constructed to connect the main house with a former stable-garage converted to a recreation room, and an old formal sunken garden remodeled by the introduction of two paved areas with wood seats on two sides of each. Carefully developed new planting patterns keep the garden colorful.

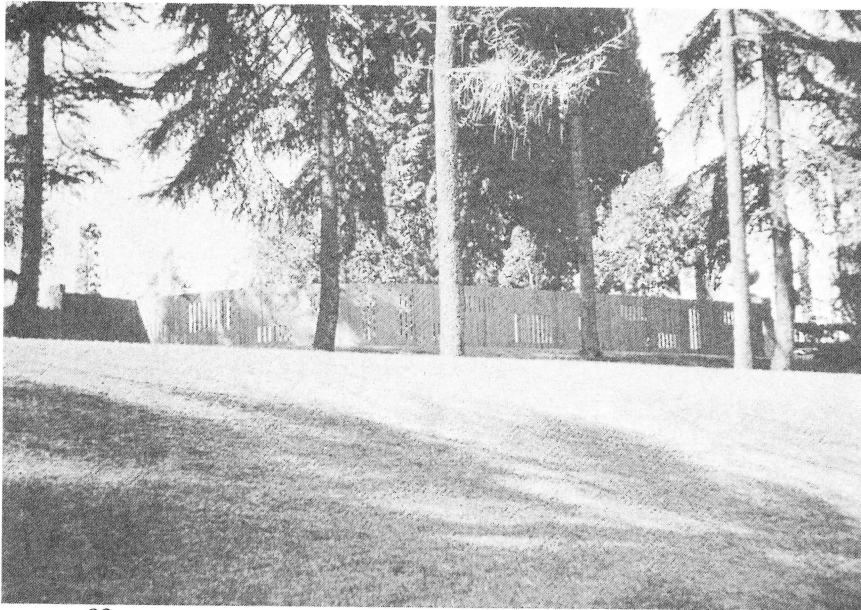
Many other detailed new and remodeled spaces and special problems have been worked out. This campus is in a constant state of active development. All work is performed by college personnel and students. Mr. Herbert Armstrong, president, and Mr. Jack Elliot, dean of men, have participated actively in development decisions.

Existing trees are primarily deodar, camphor, Canary Island pine, olive, *Ficus elastica*, *Pittosporum undulatum*, *Podocarpus elongatus*.



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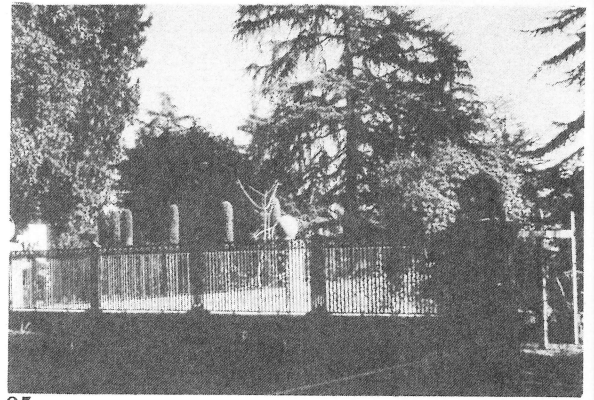
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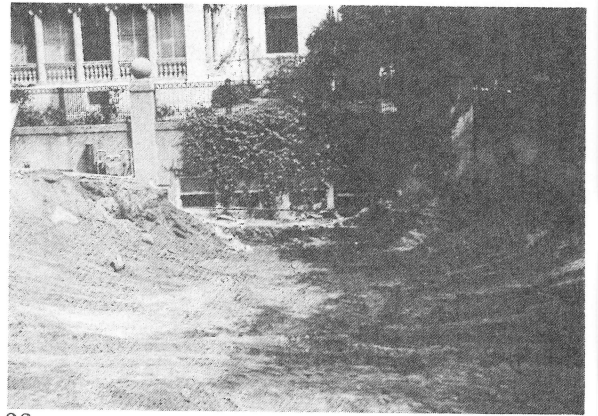
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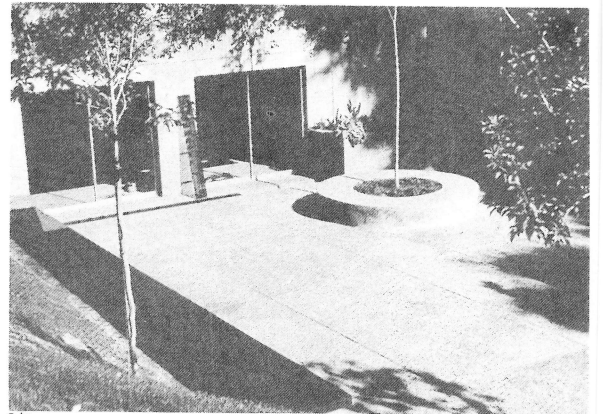
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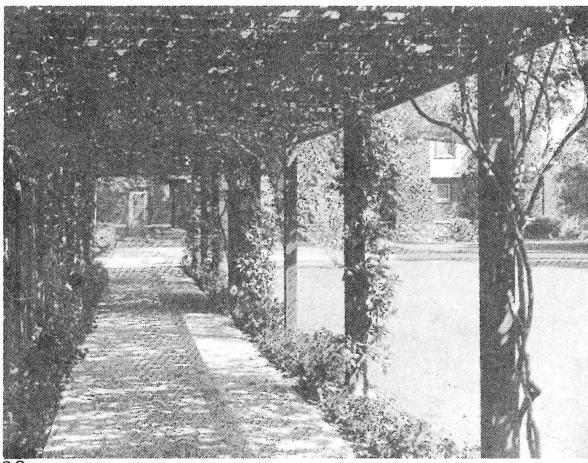


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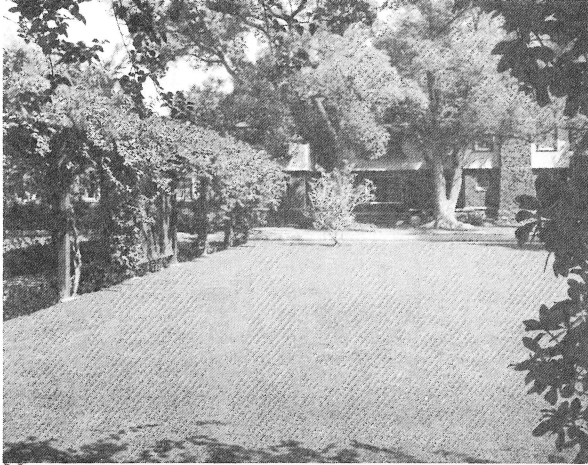


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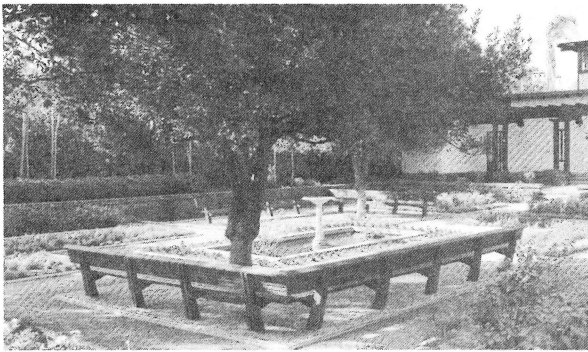
- 22 Pool patio enclosure from southeast.
- 23 Pool patio enclosure.
- 24 Pool patio south toward Terrace Villa.
- 25 Pool patio enclosure from west. Existing metal grill and concrete frame turned 90° from position left of picture.
- 26 Pool patio partially excavated. Pool behind lower windows.
- 27 Pool patio completed. Deck drain grill standing against wall between openings.
- 28 Del Mar pergola.
- 29 View toward Del Mar house from formal garden showing connecting pergola.
- 30 Seat and paving added to formal garden.
- 31 Terrace Villa patio.
- 32 View toward Del Mar pergola and playroom. Neighboring apartments beyond.
- 33 Entrance into remodeled formal garden at Del Mar. Pergola, seat, and pebbly concrete paving added. Old overgrown laurel specimens trimmed up into tree form.



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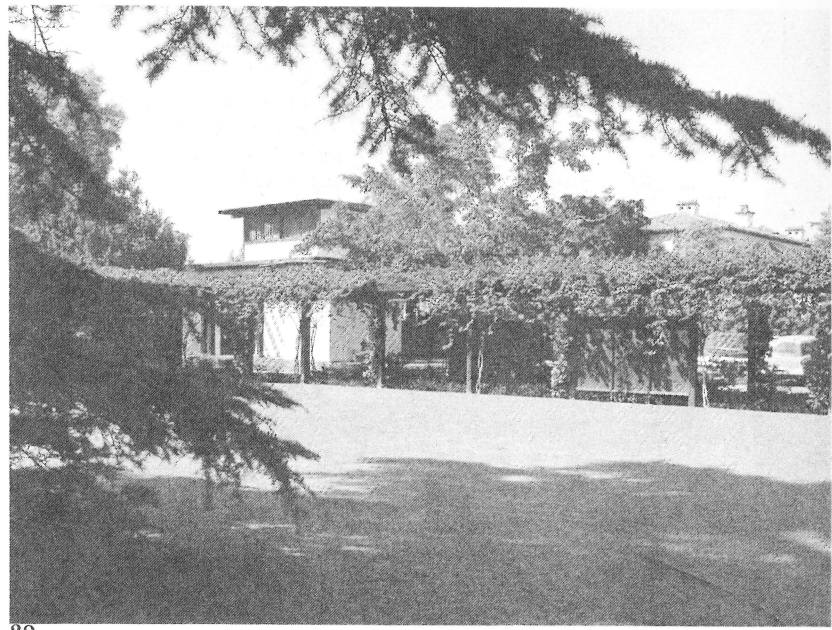
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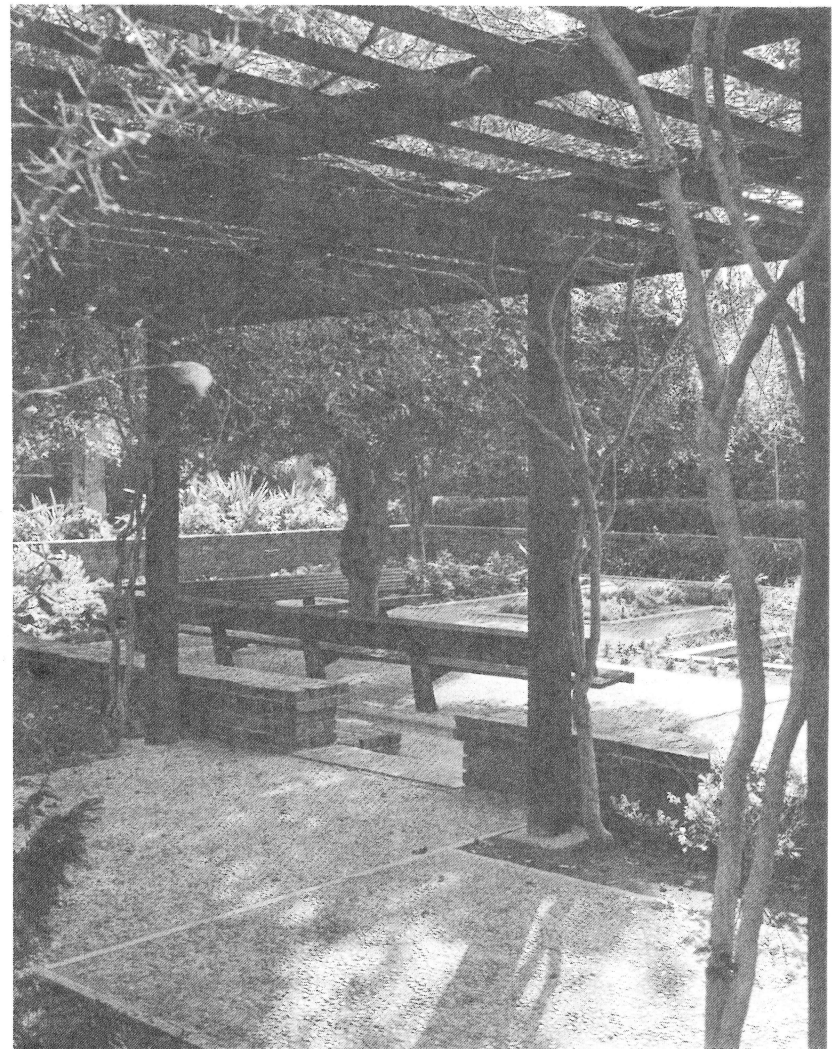
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