



Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021



Operating Hours

- Open Wednesday through Saturday.
 - 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Guided tours available by reservation on Wednesday and Saturday mornings.
- Self-guided tour handouts of the grounds are available near the parking lot.



Recent Events

- Summer Shakespeare Event
 - Saturday, July 23, 2022.
 - First event since 2020.
 - First time utilizing only on-site parking for an open house.
 - Limited registration for parking.
 - 105 guests participated.



Recent Events

- Summer Shakespeare Event
 - Modjeska Shakespeare Players and Orange Town Revival provided entertainment.
 - House was open with docents available to answer questions.
 - Modjeska candies (marshmallow caramels) available for everyone to try.



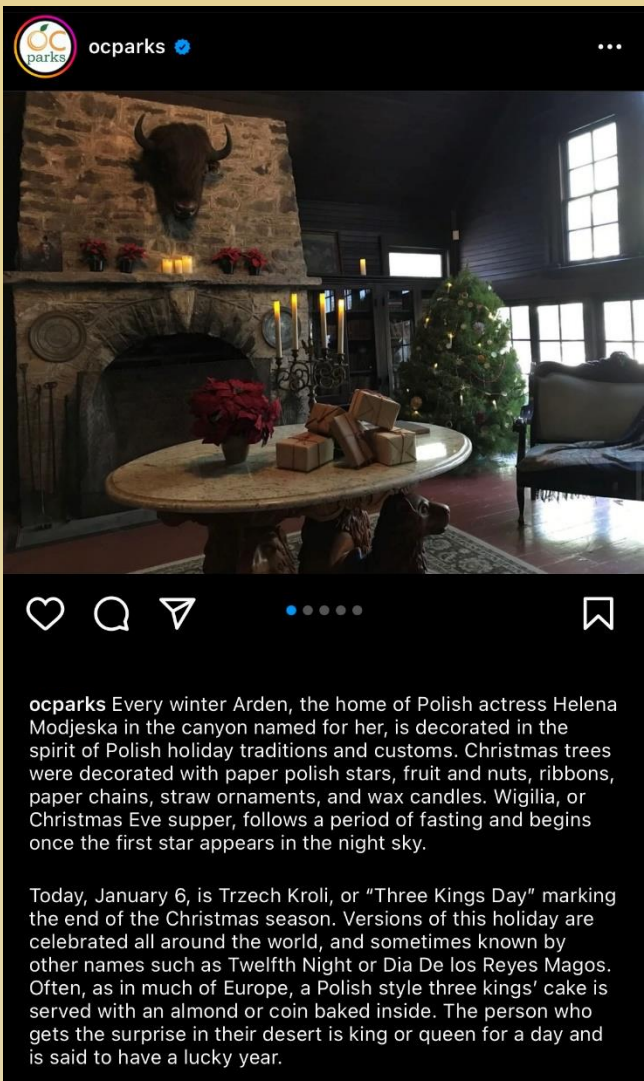
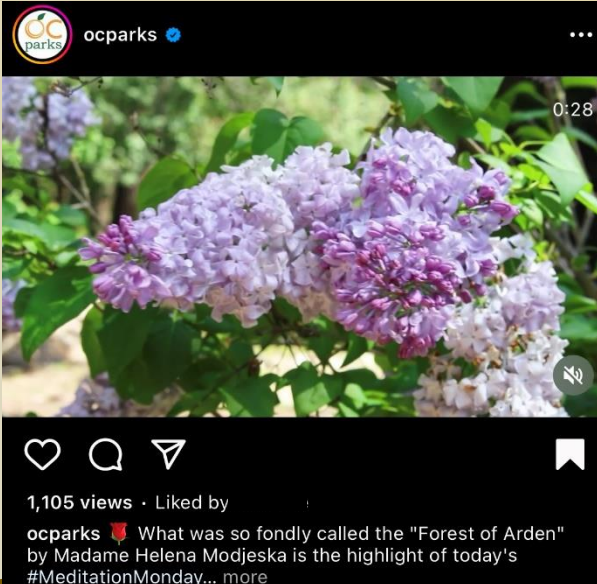
Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021



Social Media

- Throwback Thursday posts alternate between historical sites, Archaeology/Paleontology Collections, and the history of other parks.
- All posts go on Facebook and Instagram.
- Arden related posts usually occur approximately once every 2–3 months.
- Usually centered around photos or videos with short written descriptions.



Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021





Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021







Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021





Completed Projects

- First Docent Training
 - Utilized new training material.
 - Three new docents trained in Spring 2022.
 - Second training will occur in Fall 2022.
- Knox Box installed at entrance
 - Allows for improved response from local fire and police in the event of an emergency.

Docent Training

Other Artistic Endeavors

Modjeska's artistic abilities extended far beyond her acting talents. While at Arden she was able to devote time to her other artistic passions, such as sketching, sewing and designing costumes, and writing.

One of Modjeska's masterpieces was a fairytale book she wrote and illustrated at Arden in 1896 for her grandson, Felix. The book is over 100 pages long with intricate drawings. Modjeska was always mindful of maintaining her Polish roots while in America and wrote the book in both Polish and English.



Left: Modjeska's sketch of Mary Stuart, image courtesy UNC-Greensboro Hansen Performing Arts Collection. Top: Modjeska's sketch of Rosalind, image courtesy Bowers Museum. Bottom: An illustration from Modjeska's fairy tale book.



Why Arden?

"The whole picture looked more like fantastic stage scenery than a real thing, a looking at it, my imagination carried me far, far beyond the hills, back to the footlights again. A few years later we bought this place, and I called it 'Arden,' because like the 'Forest of Arden' in 'As You Like It,' everything that Shakespeare speaks of was on the spot, -- oak trees, running brooks, palms, snakes, and even lions, -- of course California lions, -- really pumas."

--Helena Modjeska, *Memories & Impressions*, 294



Modjeska as Rosalind in *As You Like It*. Photo courtesy Theatre Institute in Warsaw.

By naming her California estate Arden after the Forest of Arden in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Modjeska's choice spoke to both the untamed environment of Santiago Canyon and to her life on the stage. The name successfully branded her new secluded canyon retreat as the home of one of America's premiere actresses.

California Dream Revisited

Modjeska and Bozenta purchased their Santiago Canyon property as Modjeska reached the pinnacle of her American career. Whereas their experiment living close to the land in Anaheim had failed due to lack of experience and lack of resources, they now had the financial stability to support their ranch, even if they were only onsite a couple months each year.

"Once again they tried on the role of California rancher, yet this time they treated their purchase as a deserved, supportable indulgence rather than an essential livelihood. They were ready now to pursue the tourist variant of the California dream."

--Beth Holmgren, *Starring Madame Modjeska*, 136



Modjeska enjoying her flower garden and Bozenta tending his vegetables.

Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021



Interactive Digital Tour Map

Tour One (1877) Tour Two (1877-1878) Tour Three (1878-1879) Tour Four (1882-1883) Tour Five (1883) Tour Six (1883-1884) Tour Seven (1884) Tour Eight (1885-1886) Tour Nine (1886) Tour Ten (1886-1887) Tour 11 (1887) →

Elmira, NY
October 10, 1883

In her first trip to Elmira, NY, Modjeska played at the Opera House (sometimes known as the Lyceum Theater) as Viola in *Twelfth Night*.

Utica, NY

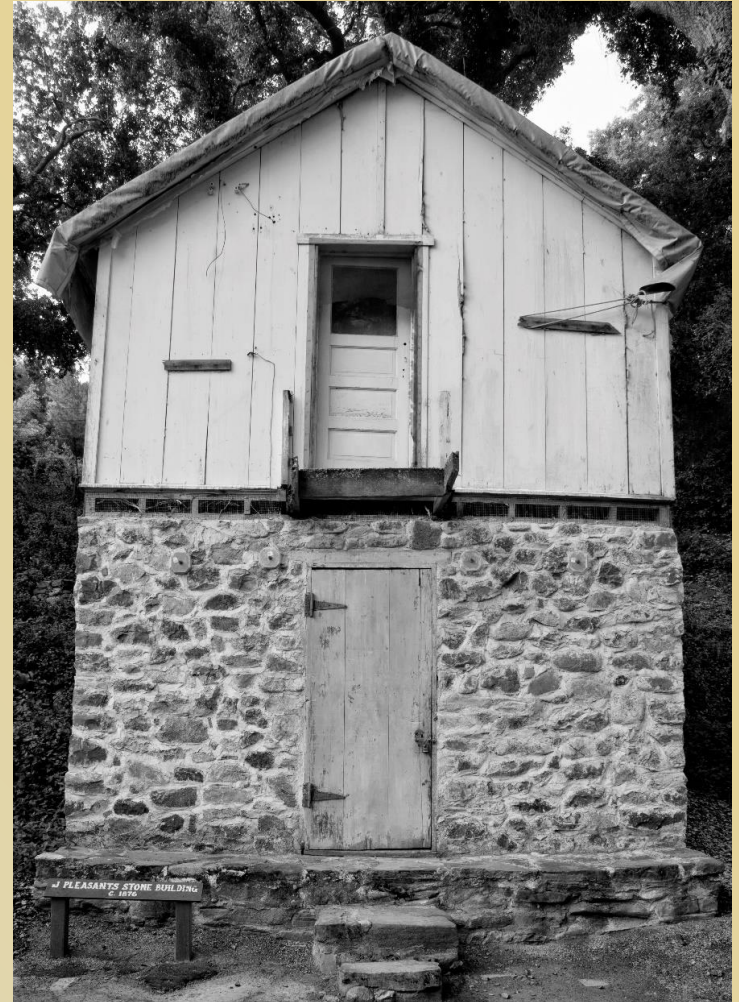
Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021



Upcoming Projects

- Other Thematic Tour Options
- Stone Building Restoration
 - National Park Service—Save America's Treasures Grant.
 - Will allow for more interpretive opportunities and addition of a new space to the tour.
- Virtual Tour of Arden
 - Will allow home viewing from anywhere in the world.



Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021



Questions or Comments?



Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House & Gardens Annual Update

OC Historical Commission — September 6, 2021

