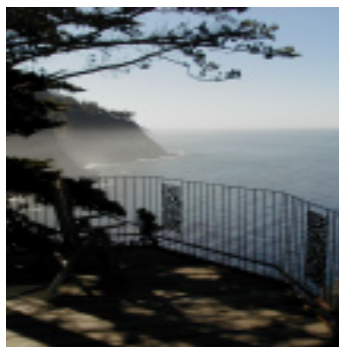


f r i e n d s o f

Esalen

n e w s l e t t e r



Baths Re-Open After Four Years



THE BATHS ARE OPEN and they are magnificent! After four and a half years, several million dollars and a series of challenges that were almost insurmountable, the restoration of the Esalen baths on their original site at the source of the hot springs is complete.

The footprint of the “new” baths is only 10% larger than the old baths that were destroyed in the El Niño storms of February 1998. But the design by award-winning architect Mickey Muennig is spacious and has a gracious quality to it. Made primarily of board-formed concrete, sandstone, and clearstory windows, the design matches simple elegance with enduring strength and easy maintenance.

The first thing you will encounter when coming down the hill is the upper level with its outdoor massage deck and “living” roof planted in native coastal grasses. Also on the upper level is a completely ADA-accessible changing room, bathroom, massage room, and hot tub. The massage room is equipped with a hydraulic massage table (a gift from a generous donor) which can be raised or lowered in an instant to the appropriate height. Also included is a hot tub equipped with a special lift for handicapped access.

The cantilevered ceiling of the massage room, changing room, and bathroom is designed with wood

Keeping a Dying Art Alive page 4

Campaign Update page 5

Abundant Esalen Garden page 6



Baths as seen from the path.

alternating with plexiglass to create soft opaque lighting in the upper level rooms.

The lower level of the baths is entered by descending steps toward a lovely perpetual fountain. Water flows over a tiled mosaic crafted by artist Elle Leonard based on a Japanese print by Hokusai entitled "Amida Waterfall on the Kiso Road." The design was chosen to represent a peaceful recollection along a journey. Turning right you go down more



Graceful arches are a design theme throughout the baths.

steps past the bathrooms and storage room to the lower level. You will turn left to enter the south or "silent" side. Here, there is a changing room; a massage room with three massage tables; and the large bathing area with two large hot tubs, two individual bath tubs, and six massage tables.

Turning right you go toward the north or "quiet" side where you will find another changing room and a beautiful shower room perched over the ocean. The baths were designed to optimize the views of the ocean whether it be in the tubs, the shower, or the massage rooms.

The outside area to the north is designed so that the first section containing two large tubs and several private clawfoot tubs is partially covered but open to the ocean views and breezes. Further north on the cliffside edge are two large, open stone tubs that offer the incomparable experience of being suspended above the rocks and ocean. The outside tubs resemble the ones at the old tubs.

The rebuilding of the baths has been a challenging project on one of the most difficult building sites in the

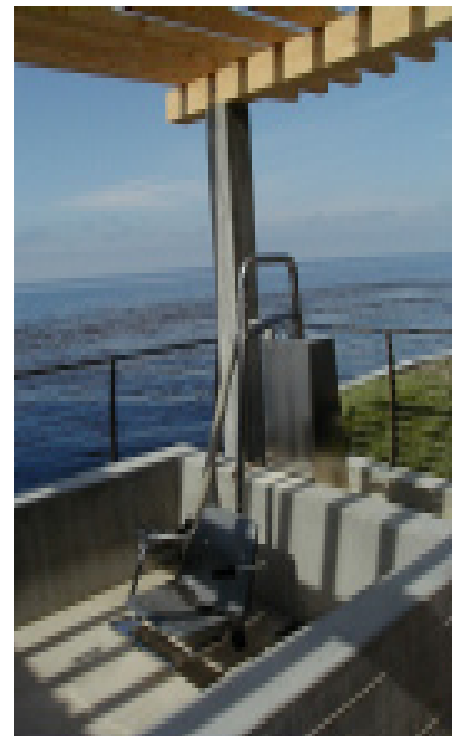
world. Architect Mickey Muennig calls it "a labor of love."

The remoteness of Big Sur made finding contractors and workers difficult and expensive. The old cinderblock baths evolved organically in an era when building codes, earthquake design, and liability laws were nonexistent or less stringent.

To save the original site we needed to stabilize the slope above and install a new foundation below the baths. We knew, however, if we abandoned this site, we would never be able to build there again. New public buildings are rarely allowed on a coastal cliff face.

The site, on the rocky ledge perched just 50 feet above the Pacific, is unparalleled in its majestic beauty. Natural hot springs flow from the ground at 119 degrees at 80 gallons/minute. These same healing waters have been flowing for centuries providing respite for Esselen Indians and others.

The new baths' proximity to the ocean offers rare and up-close glimpses into the lives of sea creatures such as otters, seals, birds, and migratory whales with their young.



A special lift will assist people with disabilities.

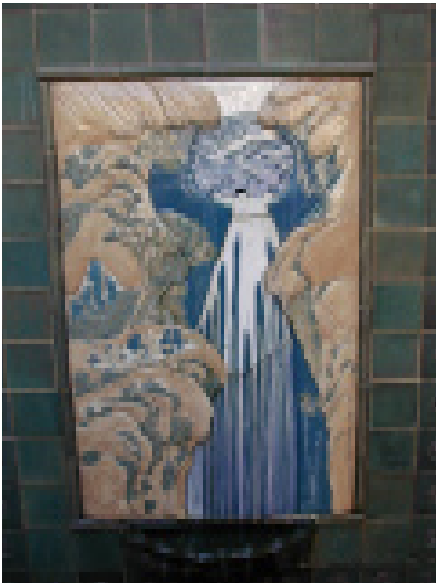
The temporary wooden tubs up the hill near the Fritz building have served us well over the past four years. In agreement with the use permit we received from the county, they will be removed.

Many thanks go to the project managers, Torrey Waag and Jerry Parks, as well as to the crews of general contractor Butch Kronlund.

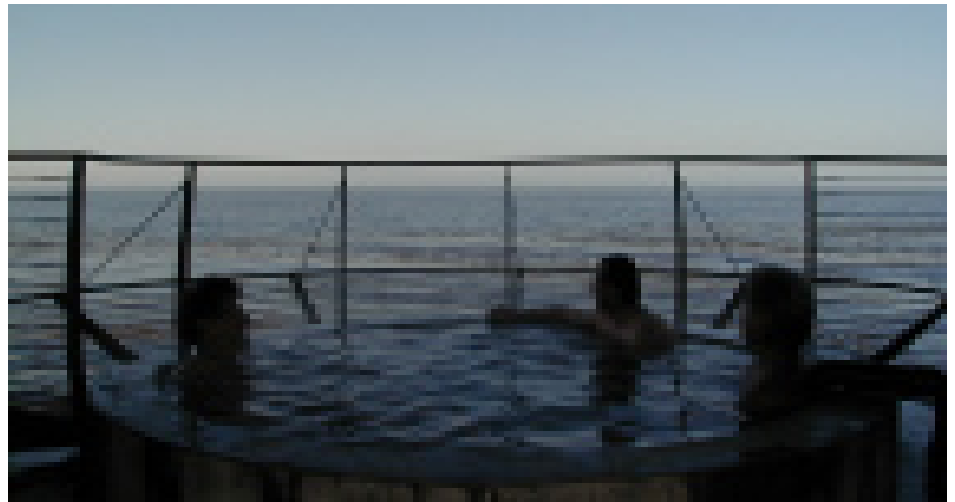
Many thanks also to our fabulously generous donors who have helped over the years to provide the funds to complete this project. We could not have done it without you!



The upper deck features an outdoor massage area and a living roof planted with native grasses. In the background is a massage room, changing area, and bathroom which are designed for people with disabilities.



A mosaic fountain (above) crafted by Elle Leonard greets you as you enter the baths. The “silent” or south side (below) features large indoor tubs.



Three outdoor tubs on the north side are perched just feet above the ocean.



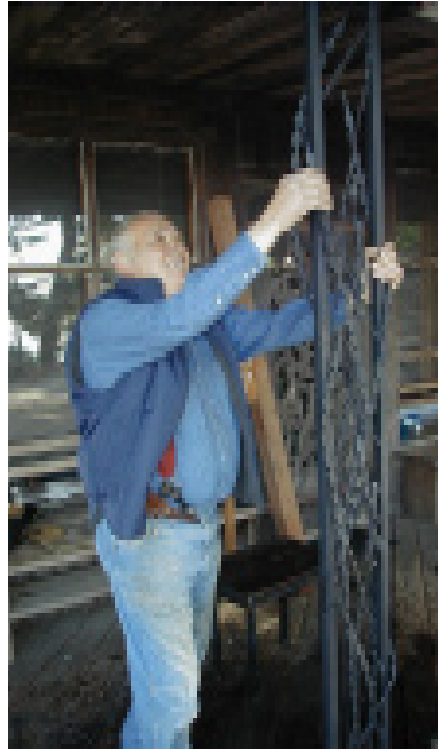
Keeping a Dying Art Alive

by K Mello

Those of us who stroll the Esalen property with a noticing eye have undoubtedly seen and admired the ironworks of Joe Caming. Joe first came to Esalen in 1967, working in the maintenance department, the kitchen (including a stint as the headwaiter), and doing massage. He talks with a glint in his eye of playing chess with Fritz Perls in the lodge in the middle of the night when Fritz couldn't sleep.

Joe left Esalen in 1972, was a Big Sur woodcutter for 17 years with an old truck named Blue Boogaloo, and created sculptures using a chainsaw. Joe returned to Esalen's maintenance department to stay in 1986 and began learning the craft of blacksmithing from Helmut Hillenkamp. Joe officially became a blacksmith in 1987 and still goes to two conferences each year to expand his learning and to further incorporate the art of blacksmithing into ironworking.

When asked about the beautiful and surprise-filled tulip lights just off the lodge back deck, Joe says, "I was copying the filigree done by Helmut Hillenkamp and Selig Morganrath, the former head of maintenance. I realized I couldn't duplicate it, but why not put my own spin on it?"



Joe Caming inspecting some of his ironwork on the lodge deck.

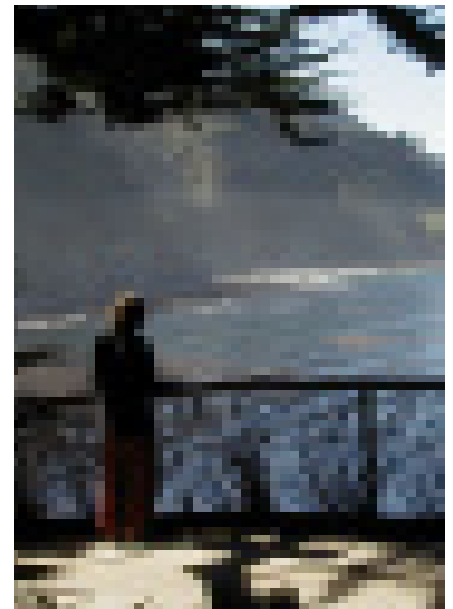
Joe's own spin was to subtly hide names in the intricate design of the tulip lights. "I realized I could put names of guys in the shop and names of friends. There's names of the living and the dead in the lights."

A recent addition to the Esalen grounds that has received a lot of attention is the new fencing that graces the edge of the ocean just off the back deck of the lodge. Joe says he, "wanted to give an impressionistic rendering of kelp. Then when I discovered at the Aquarium what kelp really looks like, I was horrified at how far from reality I was. Nevertheless, people always compliment me on my kelp, saying I've captured the flow and movement of the kelp in the metal." Indeed, as one looks through the fence with the ocean in the background, the rhythm of the water gives this functional work of art an even greater effect of kelp dancing in the waves.

Additional handiwork for which we can thank Joe includes: the Pagoda path lights all over the property; the

supporting pool deck; the railings at both the main and South Coast pools; the railing from the sweat lodge to the Big House; the joist hangers on the dance dome and pool decks; the curved steps and balcony railings leading to the Art Barn; and his work can be admired at the new baths. He also built a gas forge at the Art Barn where several workshops per year are offered in metal working.

Joe works the iron bars by hand in the maintenance shop. "Blacksmithing allows me to form the metal... take raw metal and forge it



New fencing off lodge deck.

into a more artistic form than ordinary welding. It's an archaic form of art and work that got lost in our technological world. Keeping a dying art alive is gratifying." Joe is keeping the art alive and passing on his reverence for his craft; he has had his current apprentice, Seth, for two years. Joe built Seth coal and gas forges, and Seth now has his own shop. Seth still comes every Sunday to learn from the master.

Thank you, Joe, for creating so many beautifully functional works of art.

K Mello serves as assistant to the Friends of Esalen and the Work Study Program.

Recycling Old Dirt Into New



One of the many challenges we faced while building the new baths was what to do with all of the earth, plant material, and wood debris excavated to build the foundation and lay the electrical trenches and what to do with the debris from the original baths. The answer - RECYCLE!

What was left of the old wooden/cinder block building from the earlier bath house was salvaged along with the falsework from the new baths and has been used for odd building and repair projects around the property. It has also been given away to others in Big Sur for their projects.

The steel left over from building the false work of the new tubs (a safe place where workers could stand perched over the cliff while pouring concrete) was salvaged and, along with the recycled wood, made into simple huts on the farm.

We began collecting the earth and miscellaneous debris from the baths into a huge compost pile. Other debris from grounds clean ups, tree pruning, etc. was added to it over the past two and a half years and cooked itself into reusable soil. Instead of hauling it off and buying new soil for the planting area on the roof of the tubs we have recycled our old and made it new again.

Savings are hard to calculate. The savings in not having to buy new soil for the roof of the baths alone is estimated at \$4,000.

Campaign Update by Serena D'Arcy-Fisher

During the past several months, the Trustees of Esalen have continued the process of bringing the Esalen Campaign for the Future "in house," and have adopted initial plans for an ongoing Office of Development which will incorporate and co-ordinate all of the development responsibilities of the Institute. Under the guidance and leadership of Ann Knoll Downing, Volunteer Chair of Major Gifts, and Andy Nusbaum, Executive Director, long-range plans for fundraising development include: alumni relations, donor relations, events, public relations, and support for the construction of new facilities needed by the Institute, facilities which have been designed to implement the organization's commitment to environmental sustainability.

Some may see this mission as an unprecedented and somewhat controversial step for Esalen. In reality it is an appropriate, indeed essential, step in the life of the institution if it is to be able to continue to serve, as it has so reliably in the past, as a catalyst and sanctuary for interdisciplinary and innovative thinking in human potential, spiritual, and diplomatic circles.

A year-long celebration in honor of Esalen's 40th Anniversary is about to begin. A weekend at Esalen in early November will inaugurate that year and celebrate the completion of the first stage of the Esalen Campaign for the Future — the completion of the magnificent new baths. The opportunity to view and experience first hand the new baths evidences the endurance and integrity of the organization, its commitment to quality, and its reaffirmation of its dedication to nourishment of mind, body, and spirit.

We wish to thank our many volunteers, donors, sponsors, and advertisers who have contributed time and talents to insure the success of this landmark event. Although this is being written in September, the enthusiasm for the celebration, the anticipation of being together at Esalen for a remarkable weekend, and the financial support already flowing are truly inspiring. A heartfelt thanks to all of you.

Throughout this Anniversary Year, additional celebrations are planned for other locales, such as Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and San Francisco. We invite all Esalen friends, new and not so new, to join us in honoring Esalen's rich history and contributions to our world evolution, and to be a part of the blossoming future. Log on to our website for updates.

The 40th Anniversary Year will also be commemorated in a Special Edition publication. Esalen leaders, alumni, friends, staff and family are invited to pay tribute to Esalen and its 40 years of pioneering work. Contributions to this publication will be solicited during the Anniversary Year. Information on how you can participate and contribute will be posted on the Esalen website soon.

Please contact us if you would like to support Esalen as a volunteer, make a donation to the Institute, or discuss further how you could support Esalen's future. We'd love to hear from you. Please call or write: 415-884-4307 or send us a message at info@esalencampaign.org

"The best place for this incredible healing experience. Thanks a million Michael Murphy and Dick Price!!! for your vision and accomplishment and thanks to all of you who keep passing it on to all of us."
Esalen Seminarian

The Esalen Garden: A Study in Abundance

by Udo Zindel

Rumor has it that in the mid-1960's a mother dug up a little patch of sod where the Esalen garden is today, to grow fresh, healthy vegetables for her child. Over the decades, the garden (and the "farm" on the north side of the art barn) has grown organically, like much of Esalen, without a masterplan. Today it is the heart of the property, a place of colors and smells, of peaceful quiet and abundance.

During the main growing season (May to January) the garden and farm produce about 90 percent of the vegetables served at Esalen. Rather than having to wonder if the food is "organic," here you can watch the plants grow as you walk to the lodge. The lettuce, the carrots, the snap and snow peas, the sunflower sprouts that you find on the salad bar are harvested daily before breakfast. The same is true for the broccoli, the kale, the cauliflower that are served with your meal. They have not been trucked for hundreds of miles or been refrigerated for a week or more. They are full of life as you bite into them.

Everything in the garden is done by hand from the bed prep to planting, weeding, hoeing, and harvesting. From April to November, 13 workscholars, extended students, interns, and staff work in the farm and garden. The number drops to 9 in the winter.

Rather than try to eliminate bugs, as many large-scale organic and conventional growers do, the motto here is "let's have as many bugs as we can!" Recently, in fact, the pond was added to the garden to provide a habitat for even more species.

Esalen gardeners rely on diversity: They grow close to 50 crops, many of them with several varieties, plus an abundance of flowers and weeds. All plants have a wide array of associated critters and they keep each other in check. The likelihood that one species will take over is very low. And while the gardeners do keep organic sprays



Gardeners Katrina Dunbar and Udo Zindel prepare to plant out organic seedlings grown at Esalen.

just to be prepared, years go by without having to use them.

Conventional agriculture uses fertilizers, pesticides, and insecticides to ensure optimal production and financial returns. At Esalen our priority is to nurture the soil.

In a teaspoon of Esalen garden soil we estimate there are 11,000 species and some 4 billion individuals. "We are not just feeding the plants," says Steve Beck, Esalen's long-term farm and garden manager, "we are feeding all of those critters."

The Esselen Indians lived on these lands for more than 4000 years. They gathered wild plants as well as fish and kelp and shells from the ocean. The Esalen farmers and gardeners today grow food on their "compost" so to speak and occasionally still dig up an abalone shell in the garden beds. Soil is very precious. "It's a big deal," says Steve Beck. "In this climate, it takes about 1000 years to make one inch of topsoil. And while the Esalen farmers have gathered three decades of experience, they know enough to understand that, on a deeper level, they know nothing. In a very profound way, agriculture with its mindboggling

complexity remains a mystery."

Udo Zindel is a freelance journalist with German public radio. He is spending the year as a farm/garden tent scholar.

The Friends of Esalen Newsletter is published three times per year by Esalen Institute as an informational vehicle for our supporters.

Esalen Institute was founded in 1962 as an alternative educational center devoted to the exploration of the human potential.

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Support for Today • Building for the Future

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the many wonderful Friends of Esalen who generously support our operations and special projects. The following is a list of friends who have given or pledged over \$500 from 1/1/2002-9/15/2002. We couldn't be here without you!

Italics below indicate a lifetime donation giving commitment and/or a donation pledge of \$100,000 or more

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Historic Tubs to be Auctioned

Take home a piece of history and support Esalen! Now that the bath restoration is complete we will be disassembling and auctioning off the temporary redwood tubs that have served us well since 1998. The auction will take place on November 2nd and you need not be present to win. The starting bid price is \$1,000 for each of the small tubs and \$1,500 for the larger tub. Buyers will pay shipping costs. All are made from redwood and will require plumbing and assembly once purchased. For more information or to place a bid call (831) 667-3032.

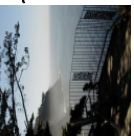


Live Near Esalen: House for Sale

Have you ever wanted to live in Big Sur close to Esalen? Now is your chance. Esalen is selling a house we own on 1.3 acres just one mile north of our front gate. The property is on the ocean side of Highway One. The 1800 square foot house has three bedrooms and two full baths. Features include a wrap-around deck, panoramic views, proximity to the ocean and a great history (Ida Rolf, Dick Price, and Stan and Christina Grof all lived there at different times.) Our asking price is \$1,850,000.

For more information call
(831) 667-3032.

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