



Facility History

Lush land now named Rancho Las Lomas had many owners before Jeannie and Rick Lawrence purchased it twenty-five years ago. Recorded history shows that the land was bequeathed to the Serrano Family via a Mexican land grant. But before that, it belonged to the coastal Indians. Different tribes roamed the territory stretched alongside what is now Scenic Route #18. There were harvests on the land for them to gather, including Fruiting Cholla, prickly-pear cactus and the beloved White sage that blanketed the foothills.

By the time the United States government decided to preserve the neighboring territory to the east and call it the Cleveland National Forest, Ranchos Las Lomas was sold two more times. Settlers continued migration into the region, the first ones arriving by covered wagons advancing to Model-T Fords as Orange County continued its transformation from wilderness to burgeoning metropolis.

Today, mature oak and sycamore trees hide the large home and the many bungalows housed on the Rancho Las Lomas estate. Over the years, Jeannie and Rick Lawrence and their sons continue to renovate and enhance the Rancho's original buildings. Avid collectors, they have recycled salvage materials such as old doors, windows, bricks and lumber, filling the property's buildings with unexpected surprises including hand-painted tile murals collected during a trip to Portugal in 1978. Wood beams adorned with hand painted figures, custom stained glass windows, 100-year-old Pasadena street lamps and a vintage gumball machine that dispenses food into a tranquil pond filled with Koi are some of the collectibles found benefiting Rancho Las Lomas. The many fireplaces and multiple outdoor walkways are constructed from river rock harvested along the meandering Aliso Creek.

During their extensive travels, the Lawrence's found themselves seeking out public gardens and zoos. A unique sanctuary in Nepal became the source of their inspiration. Over the past two decades they have added many varieties of rare birds and exotic animals. The ever-changing cast of residents that fill Rancho Las Lomas's licensed semi-private zoological garden include Scarlet Macaws, regal Bengal Tigers and the lively Zebra's. Whether extremely rare or commonly found, each are treated with loving respect for its status in the world.

Today, the Lawrence family lives full time at Rancho Las Lomas, always tending to the property and keeping their eyes on the details. Under their steadfast care, the rancho continues to evolve; never less beautiful than it is today, and never as beautiful as it will be one day.