



November, 2013

Volume 21—No. 4

Victoria Avenue Historic Figure – Charles M. Dammers

Part 2

by Darleen DeMason

In the last [newsletter](#) I started a short biography of Commander Charles M. Dammers, who owned 20 acres of citrus on the west side of Victoria Avenue between Mary and Jane. In that issue, I presented his early life, service in the British Royal Navy, his ranch in Argentina and the birth of his two children, his marriage, his famous horse chestnut tree, and his successes growing citrus, gardening, and plant collecting. In this segment, I cover his interests in Entomology, his later life and what became of his property and house. Again, I rely very heavily on **Bill Wilkman's** report on Charles Dammers that he prepared for Stater Bros. Market.

Interests in Entomology and Insect illustration - It is not clear when Charles Dammers started engaging in the study of insects. It may have been an interest that started in childhood. Growing up in England in his time, he would have been exposed to extensive coverage of natural history, including entomology, during his primary school education. Dr. Douglas Yanega (Museum Scientist, [UCR Entomology Research Museum](#)) told me in an interview on October, 22 that he had seen study cards used in primary schools in England of insect families that the children were required to learn, and among them were fairly esoteric families that were not taught until upper division university courses in Entomology in the US today. A talent that dovetailed Dammers' interest in insects was an interest in art, especially the art of insect illustration. We can only surmise how Charles Dammers became so active in these fields in his day. First, I provide background information relevant to these events.

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Remembering Marie Hempy — by Pati Weir

Marie Hempy, born May 2, 1930, passed away peacefully at her home on Tuesday October 15, 2013. Marie received her Bachelor's degree from UCLA and Masters from UCSB, focusing on music and drama. Prior to moving to Riverside in 1960 she worked for the McClatchy Company in Sacramento recording radio programs for children that were then broadcasted to local schools. She was a partner in a successful silkscreen printing business then changed careers to selling real estate and eventually established Shelter West Realty with two other partners. She was involved in a number of community activities: actor and director of the Riverside Community Players, active member and past president of Soroptimist International of Riverside, Victoria Avenue Forever, and Master Gardener at UCR specializing in succulents. For over forty years she was a member of the "Why Nots" a musical group that performed often throughout the city of Riverside. Marie was also an avid world traveler and skilled photographer. Her travels took her to places such as Africa, South America, including Macchu Picchu and the Galapagos Islands. Marie is survived by her three sons, Daniel, David, Robert and five grandchildren.

[*Continued on page 2*](#)

President's Corner—Darleen DeMason

Victoria Avenue Forever's year has started off with a bang. The Board membership has not changed but a little "musical chairs" has taken place in the officer list ([page 3](#)). Jim Dudek stepped down as Treasurer and former President Frank Heyming took over. Lori Yates has taken over as Vice-President and I have started as President. Susan McClintock has remained as Recording Secretary. As part of the ballot to members last summer, we provided the opportunity for you, the membership, to make suggestions to us. We were very pleased with the thoughtful and worthy suggestions that we received and we will determine what issues we can address in the coming year. One suggestion was that we become more effective in communicating with our membership. To accomplish that goal we need to collect e-mail addresses from members and that effort is described on [page 3](#). Please help us by providing your address.

VAF has already completed two work days this year. The first one was unanticipated. We were contacted by California Baptist University because they wanted to involve their incoming freshmen in volunteer projects during orientation week and they offered 40 students for the morning of August 31st. Frank Heyming quickly organized a work day, which he describes on [page 4](#). On October 12th we had our first planned work day and it was a great success. We planted 300 'Ragged Robin' roses on both sides of the median between Adams St. and St. Lawrence. We had 60 volunteers show up including Girl Scout Troops 248 and 493, UCR Students in-

cluding some from a group call "Flying Samaritans", students from Woodcrest Christian School and Poly High School as well as members of VAF. Two VIPs who showed up were Dr. Donald Merhaut, UCR Extension Specialist and Ward 3 City Council candidate, Valarie Hill. Although we faced some confusion due to the Hometown Heroes Run that took place on Victoria Avenue that same morning, the weather was perfect we got those roses planted in record time. We finished, cleaned up and took a group photo at about 10:15AM. Board member, Kurt Gunther took pictures of all the activities that morning and posted them with captions on the [VAF website](#) – so stop by and take a look. We thank everyone who made this a successful work day!

Last month we lost one of our own – Marie Hempy. I met her in Soroptimist and she recruited me into VAF when she was President-elect. Her leadership (1995-2000) brought many lasting improvements and a modern vision to the Avenue. I have been thinking about her a lot lately while working with Past President Frank Heyming on the design of kiosk panels for the new Hays-Yeager Park. We sat at my dining room table sorting through pictures that Marie took on the Avenue and discussing the kiosk panels in the Dr. Lewis Park that Marie designed. We realized the tremendous efforts she invested. The legacy of her Presidency and participation in VAF is everlasting.

Enjoy the last installment of Charles Dammers!



The Why Nots—Marie is top, left.

Continued from page 1—Marie Hempy

Marie was a motivating force in Victoria Avenue Forever and its accomplishments. While a member of the VAF Board she served in many capacities including President (1995-2000). She was a strong voice and a woman with a great deal of passion in her visions to improve and enhance beautiful Victoria Avenue. Marie's contributions continue and will always be appreciated.

Some of the many Victoria Avenue projects Marie championed were:

- A kiosk at the Peter Lewis Garden at the corner of Jane Street and Victoria Avenue. Marie wrote the history and other text for the kiosk panels. She also took all the photographs of the volunteers working, the beautiful flowers in bloom at different times of the year, and the mammoth trees and shrubbery of various ages and sizes up and down the Avenue. One of her sons built the kiosk that Bill Gardner designed.
- The vintage street signs displaying the Victoria Avenue Forever logo which are located at each cross street along the entire 9 miles of the Avenue.
- The design and production of our current VAF brochure that is used throughout Riverside on counters and racks at places such as Chamber of Commerce, Mission Inn, Riverside Municipal Museum, and all VAF activities.
- Brought in Dan Hays and Gerri Marr from VAHRP to VAF who then partnered to work on undergrounding the electrical wires and restoring the median in various blocks of Victoria Avenue.

Continued on next page



Historic street signs championed by Marie Hempy

Many of the valuable VAF board members we have today were recruited by Marie. These include **Darleen DeMason** who is currently our President and **Susan McClintock**, Secretary, **Adam Timura**, plant expert, and **Marsha Loveridge**, newsletter coordinator. She also recruited **Kurt Gunther** to design and maintain a website for Victoria Avenue and VAF. After the kiosk dedication adjacent to the Dr. Lewis Garden, VAF installed a wooden bench to honor Marie.

Marie, we salute you for all your hard work and dedication over the years to our organization. Your foot print on Victoria Avenue will forever be remembered. You are missed.



Marie's bench next to the kiosk at the Dr. Lewis Garden

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Lori Yates, Vice President
Frank Heyming, Treasurer
Susan McClintock, Secretary

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James Dudek
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Newsletter

Darleen DeMason, Editor
***Victoria Avenews is published
4-6 times per year
By Victoria Avenue Forever***

**The VAF Board meets at 6:30 PM
On the second Wednesday of each
Month (except August)**

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Or call (951) 389-1032

Communication Crisis by Darleen DeMason

In the planning phases for the October 12th workday, VAF needed to alert members and to solicit them to volunteer. The newsletter only comes out 4-6 times per year and this newsletter was planned for November. We became aware of the fact that we only have e-mail addresses for about 1/7th of our members and that we had NEVER even attempted to contact members via e-mail, which is now a normal part of almost all American's lives. Now we need to generate a **secure** e-mail list for our membership. Please help us by submitting your e-mail address. The easiest way to do that is to log into your e-mail software and send us an e-mail using our general address: info@victoriaavenue.org. Then in the body of the message just give us your name. Please do it today and THANK YOU.

Cal Baptist Students Volunteer

By Frank Heyming

On August 31, 2013 incoming students at California Baptist University held a community volunteer day. Victoria Avenue Forever was the fortunate recipient of 40 CBU student volunteers. We worked on two different projects.

One project involved GPS (global positioning system) mapping and pictures of median trees on Victoria Avenue. We used "smart phones" donated by VAF members. Using the phones we took a picture and location of each tree and uploaded it to the Victoria Avenue map we had set up in "the cloud." Eventually this will assist us in identifying missing, diseased, or dead trees. It will also be of benefit in identifying trees in the commemorative tree program.

The second project we worked on was a litter pick up the entire length of Victoria Avenue from Rumsey St. to La Sierra Ave. While you might not notice trash driving by in your car, the students filled 20 bags with miscellaneous trash.

Thanks to the VAF board members Adam Timura, Tom Wilson and Darleen DeMason for assisting with this very successful work day. And a special thanks to the students of California Baptist University and Lauren Heinrich, Admissions Counselor for your help. For most of the students it was their first glimpse of Victoria Avenue and an opportunity to learn a little bit more about the rich history of Riverside.

GrowRiverside: Citrus and Beyond! Conference – March 19-20, 2014

To continue Riverside's investment in our agricultural heritage, the City is partnering with a venture called Seedstock (www.seedstock.com) to present a conference entitled "GrowRiverside: Citrus and Beyond!" The purpose of this conference is to promote economic opportunities that can result from employing sustainable agriculture in Riverside. The conference topics are: building a local agricultural future; incentivizing agriculture on the urban fringe; health and community benefits of local food; funding future farming in Riv-

Contributions to Victoria Avenue Forever July 2013- October 2013

Endowment Fund Contributions

Thank you to all who contributed to Victoria Avenue. Your gifts will be used to help protect and care for Riversides' living legacy – Victoria Avenue. We want to make sure to acknowledge every one. If your gift is not acknowledged in this issue of the AveNews, it will be in the next one.

General Contributions

William & Rosemary Bailey
P.C. & S.C. Bremenstallh
Vicki Broach
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George & Mary Weimer

Memorial Contributions

Marie Cotter
Priscilla Doshier
Margaret Robinson
Marion Russell
Carol Stadelbacher
Evan & Joanne Vail

In memory of Marian Westphal
In memory of Bob Doshier
In memory of Marie Hempy
In memory of Florence Lorenz
In memory of Richard Stadelbacher
In memory of Warner Kreutzberg

Commemorative Tree Donations

Frank and Lucy Heyming
& Isaac and Minerva Chavez

In memory of Magdalena 'Margie'
Benavides

We also thank Councilman Chris McArthur and the organizers of his Appreciation Day event where the proceeds were donated to VAF.

erside; Citrus and beyond: Riverside's agricultural future; Riverside grown: the local food landscape; urban farming in Riverside; and building a local food alliance.

Seedstock is dedicated to promoting innovation and sustainability in agriculture and facilitating connections between investors, growers, researchers entrepreneurs and non-profits by acting as an information hub and by organizing events. Seedstock has organized two annual events with the UCLA Anderson School of Management for Los Angeles.

For more info - riverside@seedstock.com

Continued from Page 1—Dammers

Natural history enthusiasts in Southern California established the Lorquin Club in 1915 in association with the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. Club activities and publications included reptiles, shells, insects and plants. Among the leaders was a physician, **Dr. John Adams Comstock** (1883-1970), who had been a butterfly enthusiast and avid artist since childhood. He became a part-time curator in the Southwest Museum and eventually left medicine and became the Museum Director in 1920. It is known that Charles enrolled his son, Carlito, in an insect illustration class at the Southwest Museum, taught by Dr. Comstock. Subsequently, in 1927 the Lorquin Club changed its name to the Lorquin Entomological Society and affiliated itself with the [Los Angeles County Natural History Museum](#). This coincided with Dr. Comstock changing employment to this Museum, his presidency of the Lorquin Society and the completion of his self-published, designed and illustrated book entitled *Butterflies of California*. The celebration was marked by the first annual month-long Butterfly Show at the Museum, an event that continues today.

In 1939, Dr. Comstock became the Associate Director for Sciences at the Natural History Museum and coordinated a comprehensive field survey of the Channel Islands. He retired in 1948 as Chief Curator of Natural Sciences for the Museum. Besides his butterfly book he published 236 scientific papers mostly of butterfly life histories. Charles Dammers co-authored 33 of these papers with Dr. Comstock based on butterfly collecting and rearing that he did. Dr. Comstock spent his later life in Del Mar where he continued his studies in his “home laboratory” until his death.

Charles Dammers collected with and for other leaders in the field of Entomology and Natural History of his time as well. One of his friends was an academic Entomologist, **Philip Hunter Timberlake** (1883-1981), who was hired by the Citrus Experiment Station in 1924, and became a member of the Entomology Department when UCR was established. Timberlake spent his career (and retirement) studying native bees in California and he described and named over 800 species of insects (mostly bees), published over 100 scientific papers and collected about 500,000 specimens, which served as the foundation for the insect collection now in the UCR Entomology Research Museum. Specimens col-

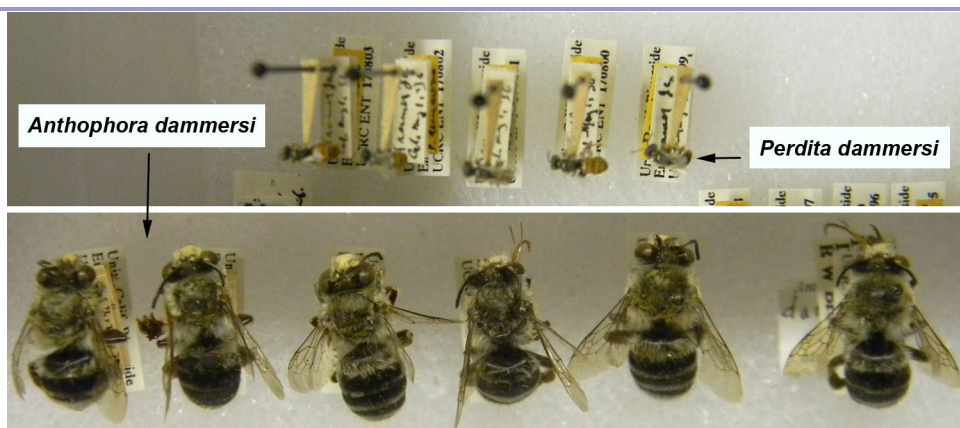


Fig. 1. Bees from the [UCR Entomology Museum](#). The smaller bee was collected by Dammers and Timberlake on 5/1/36 and the larger bee was collected by Dammers on 3/14/36. Both species were named by Timberlake in honor of Charles Dammers.

lected by Charles Dammers, including specimens the two men collected together, are in this collection (**Fig. 1**). Timberlake named four species of bees for Charles (*Anthophora dammersi*, *Dufourea australis dammersi*, *Habropodia dammersi* and *Perdita dammersi*). Although Timberlake formally retired in 1950, he continued his studies until the year before he died.

Another Riverside couple, whom Charles Dammers most certainly knew, and who was prominent in the collecting world was **John and Grace Sperry**. They amassed a very large personal museum of butterflies and moths (as well as birds, mammals and archeological artifacts) and a supporting library on their property at 3260 Redwood Dr. John Sperry was active in the Lorquin Society and the Lepidopterists Society and was a member of their Executive Council when he died in 1954. The Sperry butterfly and moth collection was donated to the Museum of Natural History in New York and to the Smithsonian Museum. Other specimens went to the Riverside Metropolitan Museum and the property is City of Riverside Structure of Merit #253.

I return to Commander Dammers. Sometime after Charles Dammers' two children arrived from Argentina (1925), he became acquainted with Dr. Comstock at the Southwest Museum and the two men found common interests that provided the basis for a lifelong friendship. Both were interested in field collections, insect life histories and illustration. Charles collected for and with Dr. Comstock and provided illustrations for his publications. In addition to the 33 publications coauthored with Dr. Comstock, Charles Dammers published two scientific papers on his own. He was mentioned 117 times in other publications [See next page](#)

and had at least 19 insects named in his honor. Charles donated a collection of insects and insect drawings to the London Natural History Museum in 1934. He also contributed specimens, both collected and reared, to the US National Museum over a number of years. In 1951, Charles Dammers donated a collection of 9500 insects including wasps, bees, moths and butterflies and 303 illustrations of insects to the LA County Natural History Museum. Charles Dammers not only collected insects but reared them in his greenhouse and in his garden. He researched food sources and described and illustrated life cycle stages of many species over the years.

Charles Dammers continues to be recognized as a leader in the Lorquin Society activities and for advancing Entomology of the time. In a book published in 1985 entitled *California Butterflies* by J.S. Garth and J.W. Tilden, they state “Members participating at this [the first Butterfly Show at the Natural History Museum in 1927] and other activities during the late 1920s and early 1930s included C.M. Dammers, . . . , and John Sperry.” (page 47). Also on that page they state “Under the guidance of Comstock and Dammers, the earlier emphasis on collecting changed to life history studies.” In the acknowledgements of this book, the authors thank the curators of the Natural History Museum “for the privilege of copying original paintings of the life history stages by C.M. Dammers.” The authors reproduced some of Charles’ illustrations as Plate 1 in their book (**Fig. 2**). Forty-eight of Charles’ illustrations were also reproduced in black and white in another book entitled *The Butterflies of Southern California*, 1973 by T.C Emmel and J. F. Emmel. And, photographs of 40 butterflies from the Museum collected by C. Dammers were presented. The collaboration between Dammers and Comstock was described by these authors in this way “In collaboration with Charles M. Dammers, a retired British naval officer, scores of detailed and beautifully illustrated life history descriptions were published in the *Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Sciences*” (page 8). This is all evidence that Charles Dammers’ contributions to the natural history of Southern California insects were and continue to be significant.

Charles Dammers’ family—Dammers’ wife, Ethel and his son, Carlito (Charles H.) also participated in insect collecting and life cycle research with Charles. Dr. Comstock mentions discoveries made by Mrs. Dammers, Carlito Dammers or the Dammers family in 6 publications as having collected important specimens or made significant observations. Ethel Dammers died in February 1946.

Carlito graduated from high school in 1933 and enrolled at RCC. Subsequently, the father and son had a permanent falling out. Carlito wanted to study electronics at a professional school in Ojai (which he did) but his father

wanted him to study agriculture at UCLA. Carlito married Mary Perrine, whom he met in an art class at RCC, and while the couple was living in San Luis Obispo County they had three daughters, Evelyn (1937), Gail (1939), and Juana (1940). The family settled in Atascadero where Carlito opened an appliance store. The marriage ended in 1942 and Mary moved back to Riverside with the daughters. Sadly, Charles Dammers did not ever meet or interact with the family. Juana tragically died in an auto accident as a child and Gail is the sole surviving grandchild. Gail recalls her father’s continued interest in insects and butterfly plants and his continued friendship with Dr. Comstock until his death. She recalls driving her father to visit him on multiple occasions. Mary

Continued on next page

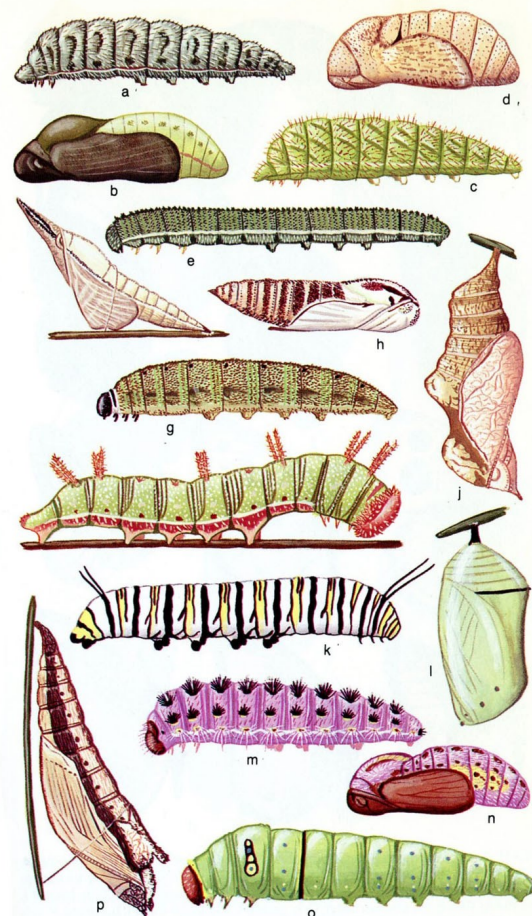


PLATE 1. a, larva, b, pupa of Acmon Blue, *Icaricia acmon* (p. 143); c, larva, d, pupa of Common Hairstreak, *Strymon melinus pudicus* (p. 131); e, larva, f, pupa of Reakirt's Orange-tip, *Anthocharis sara reakirti* (p. 113); g, larva, h, pupa of Fiery Skipper, *Hylephila phyleus* (p. 163); i, larva, j, pupa of California Sister, *Heterochroa bredowii californica* (p. 95); k, larva, l, pupa of Monarch, *Danaus plexippus* (p. 72); m, larva, n, pupa of Behr's Metalmark, *Apodemia mormo virgulti* (p. 117); o, larva, p, pupa (inverted) of Western Tiger Swallowtail, *Papilio rutulus* (p. 101). From paintings by C. M. Dammers, courtesy of Los Angeles County Natural History Museum.

Note: All plate figures slightly reduced.

Fig. 2. Group of watercolor paintings made by Dammers and reproduced in *California Butterflies* by J.S. Garth and J.W. Tilden, 1985.

died in Riverside in 1989 and Carlito died in Atascadero in 1991.

Much less is known about Charles' daughter, Esther and her heirs. She became a nurse and married an engineer named Louis Edgar. The Edgars moved to New Jersey and had three children. Jane Lamar (Charles' neighbor across Mary St.) does recall her visiting her father on several occasions. Esther died in Santa Barbara in 1999. Bill Wilkman was unable to learn anything about Esther's children. It is clear that Charles Dammers had a relatively lonely life after the death of his wife, and did not have the pleasures of watching his grandchildren grow up.

The fate of Charles Dammers and his property—

Commander Charles Montagu Dammers died on October 16, 1956 as the result of a stroke. His body was cremated and buried at Evergreen Cemetery on October 19th. Charles Dammers left most of the contents of his home to his daughter, Esther and the property and home to his granddaughters, Gail and Evelyn. Property that Dammers owned in England

was bequeathed to the British Navy and \$1 from the estate was left to his son, Carlito. By 1960 Evelyn became the sole owner of the property. Over time most of the original 20 acres was sold off and became Washington Park, Pathways Church, Washington Elementary School and two single family residences (**Fig. 3**). Dammers' original house remained on 0.57 acres at the corner of Mary and Victoria. After Evelyn's death in 1999, ownership of the this property was transferred to Deborah Jean Hart. It fell into foreclosure in 2010 or 2011 and while vacant, vandals broke into the house and did considerable damage. Stater Bros. Market purchased the property from the bank, to exchange it for a portion of Washington Park needed to expand the Market. The house was demolished in 2012. Work is in progress for the redesigned park. The plans for this park were published in the [April 2013 issue of Victoria AveNews](#). A butterfly garden is planned at the corner of Mary and Victoria within the park to commemorate the contributions of Commander Charles M. Dammers.

Fig. 3. Aerial view of Charles M. Dammers' original 20 acres of citrus between Mary and Jane as it looked in 2012. The original plot as it existed in 1929 is outlined in white. This picture was taken before Dammers' house was demolished. Figure provided by Bill Wilkman.

References

- Emmel, T.C. and J.F. Emmel. 1973. *The Butterflies of Southern California*. Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.
- Garth, J.S. and J.W. Tilden. 1985. *California Butterflies*. University of California Press.
- Bill Wilkman. 2012. *Charles Montagu Dammers Riverside California's Butterfly Man*. Wilkman Historical Services



Saturday, January 25, 2014	Saturday, February 22, 2014	Saturday, May 10, 2014
9:00 AM	9:00 AM	Great American Cleanup
Tree Planting	Rose planting; mulching	Activities TBA
Meet at corner of Adams St. and Victoria Ave.	Meet at corner of Jane St. and Victoria Ave.	Meeting Place TBA



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Dedicated to the preservation of Victoria Avenue, Riverside, California with tax-deductible financial contributions from: Membership, Endowments and Tree Commemorations: see victoriaavenue.org for details about joining or making a contribution.

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This is how we plant roses!



Work Days

January 25, 2014

February 22, 2014

May 10, 2014

See page 7 for details

