

**A  
CENTENNIAL TRIBUTE  
TO  
BALDASARE FORESTIERE**

**1879-1979**

**Self-taught Designer, Engineer,  
Architect, Sculptor, Ecologist,  
Horticulturist and Builder**



**5021 W. Shaw Avenue, Fresno, California 93705**

**DEDICATION  
of the  
FORESTIERE  
UNDERGROUND  
GARDENS**

**as a**

**CALIFORNIA REGISTERED  
HISTORICAL LANDMARK**



**8:00 P.M.  
Friday, October 12, 1979  
Fresno, California**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Nomination to the National Register  
of Historic Places  
July 14, 1977

Placed on the National Register  
of Historic Places  
October 28, 1977

Nomination for California Registered  
Historical Landmark  
January 6, 1978

Approved as a California Registered  
Historical Landmark  
January 6, 1978

Authorization for Registered Historical Landmark  
number and casting of Bronze Plaque with the following  
text:

Here, beneath the hot, arid surface of the San Joaquin  
Valley, Baldasare Forestiere (1879-1946) began in the  
early 1900's to sculpt a fantastic retreat. Excavating the  
hardpan by hand, he created a unique complex of under-  
ground rooms, passages and gardens which rambled  
throughout a ten-acre parcel. His work is being pre-  
served as a living monument to a creative and individual-  
istic spirit unbounded by conventionality.

California Registered Historical Landmark No. 916

Plaque placed by the State Department of Parks and  
Recreation in cooperation with the Rick Forestiere  
Family, October 12, 1979.

## SIGNIFICANCE

"The significance of the underground house and  
gardens complex lies in its uniqueness, its ecological  
sophistication and its statement of individual creativity.  
It has educational value, which derives from all three of  
these dimensions...The environment is sculptural, but  
creates definite spaces with architectural merit."

Galen Cranz, PhD; UC Berkeley  
State Historical Documents

"I'm fascinated by the untutored genius that appears  
now and then, even in the humblest of people, driving its  
host against all odds to do what he must. Rodia of  
Watts. Gaudi of Barcelona. Forestiere. Speculation  
about the source of such gifts inevitably leads to con-  
frontation with the unanswerable; but it also gives us, I  
think, our best reason for hope."

Malcolm Wells, Architect  
A Technical Analysis

"This is a cultural monument, which fully deserves  
public support - education, conserving some of the best  
quality in man."

Egbert de Vries, PhD.  
U. of Pittsburg, Penn.

"Every once in a while a very unusual and extraordinary  
person comes alive in a very usual and ordinary place;  
and after a little while, leaves a lasting reminder of his  
having been there."