



Designer: Julia Jane Silverstein Ries
Birth/Death Dates: 1909-2005
Practice Dates: 1933 - 2005
Firms: McCrary, Culley and Carhart, Landscape Architect (1933-1934)
Julia Jane Silverstein, Landscape Architect (1933-1943; 1947-1961)
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, New York (1945-1947)
Jane Silverstein Ries, Landscape Architect (1961-2005)
Land Mark Design, Senior Advisor (1989-2005)



Research compiled by Sabrena Stenbridge, UCD student, 2022.

Biographical Information

Julia Jane Silverstein Ries was born on March 10, 1909, in Denver, CO. Jane became certified as a Colorado Landscape Architect on June 1, 1968. She was the first woman to be certified as such, as well as the third in the entire state. Jane was a vocal advocate for environmental sustainability and stewardship. She viewed the profession of landscape architecture as training practitioners to be land stewards. She always used native plants in her designs and pushed other local landscape architects to do the same.

As a young girl, Jane knew she didn't want to get married, have children, or be a teacher. It wasn't until several years later that Jane discovered the profession of landscape architecture through a coincidental run-in her father had with a friend. Jane studied for a brief time at University of Colorado, Boulder before switching to the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women in Massachusetts. She graduated in 1932 and returned to Denver. After a short stint working for fellow landscape architect Irvin J. McCrary, Jane soon moved on. Working from her family home's upstairs sleeping porch, she began her own private practice in 1933. Through word of mouth, Jane's preferred method of advertisement to meet new clients, Jane started with with family friends to craft residential, personal gardens. As her reputation grew so, too, did her clientele.

During World War II, Jane served in the Coast Guard from 1943-1945 in New York. After her service, she worked for Skidmore, Owings and Merrill architectural firm for about one year then returned to Denver and resumed her private practice. Jane married Henry F. Ries in 1953 when she was forty-five years old. Professionally, Jane went by Julia Jane Silverstein until 1961, then incorporated her married name and changed her professional name to Jane Silverstein Ries.

Her landscaping legacy includes: Larimer Square, what she viewed as her most rewarding job because she made a "usable space"; the Museum of Natural History (1987); the Denver Art Museum (1968-1971); the Herb Garden (1973) and Scripture Garden (1981) of the Denver Botanical Gardens; the Central City Opera House Garden (1961); and Colorado State's Governor's Mansion (1964-69; 1983-84). She also restored the Molly Brown House historic gardens. Her own gardens were commemorated and preserved as designated Denver Landmark number 201 in 1992.

Jane is accredited with crafting hundreds and hundreds of private gardens and worked on many more projects. In 1946, Jane became a member of American Society of Landscape Architecture (ASLA), made Fellow in 1956, and served as President starting 1959. She is the recipient of multiple awards: the Award for Women in the Arts from the Big Sisters Salute to Women in 1980; the Twenty-third Annual Garden & Home Show Woman of the Year Award, 1982; the Coors Salute to Women Award, 1984; the AIA Community Achievement Award, 1985; the Mizel Museum of Judaica's "A Showcase of Celebrated Seniors", 1990; the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame, 1990; and the Mini Park Commendation Award for the Larimer Square project, date not precisely known.



As such a prominent and influential member of the landscape architecture community, the Colorado Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) established the Jane Silverstein Ries Award in 1983 in her honor. This was to recognize her contributions to the profession of landscape architecture, to the Colorado community, and her holistic approach to the environment. The Jane Silverstein Reis Award is given to those with a demonstrated leadership in awareness and stewardship of land use values. Jane was, of course, the first recipient of this award in 1983.

Jane passed away in 2005. The shrub *Buxus mycophylla* is named in her honor, the "Julia Jane". The ASLA bestowed upon her the ASLA Medal, the highest honor the ASLA can present to landscape architects whose lifetime achievements and contributions to the profession have had a unique and lasting impact on the welfare of the public and the environment. She left behind a legacy of sustainability, land stewardship, a holistic approach to landscape architecture, and civic engagement.

Credited Planting Designs (selected works – for a complete list please contact OAHP)

Design Name	Location	Site No.	Date*	Status
Colorado Executive (Governor's) Mansion	400 E. 8th Avenue Denver	5DV.169	1964-69; 1983-84	Denver Landmark
General Electric Demonstration House gardens	450 Race St Denver		1935	
Molly Brown House gardens	1340 Pennsylvania Street Denver	5DV.178	Early 1970s	Denver Landmark
Cheesman Park planting	Cheesman Park, Denver	5DV.5308	1971;1972	
Museum of Natural History planting	City Park, Denver	5DV.50	1987	
Denver Art Museum planting	100 W 14 th Avenue, Denver		1961	
Denver Botanic Gardens Herb Garden	1007 York Street, Denver		1973	
Denver Botanic Gardens Scripture Garden	1007 York Street, Denver		1981	
Larimer Square Renewal	1530 16th Street, Denver	5DV.104	1960s	Denver Landmark, National Register
Jane Silverstein Ries House	737 Franklin Street Denver		1992	Denver Landmark
Kock/Wheelock Garden	3300 Ash Street Denver			
Brock Garden	Either 130 Gaylord Street or 2 Polo Field Lane Denver			
Nicola Residence	Denver			
Anderman Residence	400 Ogden Street, Denver			



Design Name	Location	Site No.	Date*	Status
Marschand Garden	Either 7 Polo Club Drive or 8 Polo Club North Denver			
Knowles Garden	3 Polo Club Drive Denver			
James Suddler Garden	180 High Street Denver			

*Completion date is stated if known. Plan, building permit, or assessor date is shown if completion date is unknown.

Information Sources

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