

The Theosophical Society began its settlement on the barren and windswept slopes of Point Loma in 1896. Led by Katherine Tingley, the group came to Point Loma to establish a community that would model the philosophical and humanitarian goals of Theosophy. The "White City" envisioned by Tingley was to be located on the extreme western edge of the North American continent but oriented toward India, the spiritual center of Theosophical beliefs.



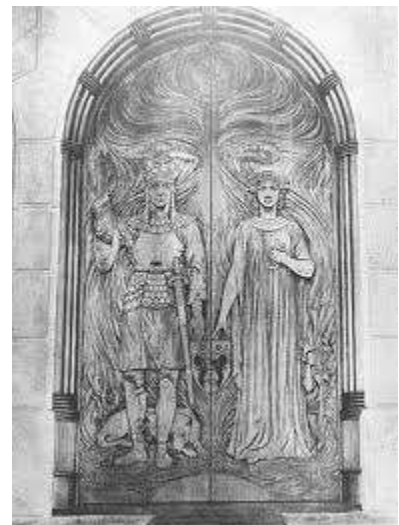
Lomaland was the [Theosophical](#) commune located in [Point Loma](#) from 1900 to 1942. Theosophical Society leader [Katherine Tingley](#) founded it in 1900 as a school, cultural center, and residential facility for her followers. The American headquarters of the [Theosophical Society Pasadena](#) was also situated there. The facility was important to the growing city of San Diego for its cultural offerings, and it left a lasting legacy in its campus (now [Point Loma Nazarene University](#)) which still retains many of the unique architectural features of the original Lomaland. The residents of Lomaland also transformed their Point Loma neighborhood by planting so many trees, orchards and shrubs that the neighborhood is now known as the "[Wooded Area](#)".

The blend of new world confidence, Victorian morality, a love of antiquity, and Indian spirituality created a unique community that found its expression in architecture that is still visible on the campus of Point Loma Nazarene University.

By 1900, the campus was dominated by the imposing Academy Building and the adjoining Temple of Peace. Both buildings were constructed in the Theosophical vernacular that included the flattened arch motif and whimsical references to antiquity. The buildings were topped by amethyst domes, which were lighted at night and could be seen offshore. The entrance to the Academy Building was dominated by two massive



carved doors that symbolized the Theosophical Principles of spiritual enlightenment and human potential. These doors are currently located in the archives of the San Diego Historical Society. The sculptor, Reginald Machell, was educated in England, but moved to Lomaland with the community in 1896. The interior furnishings he carved for the Academy Building were influenced by the Symbolist style popular in Europe at that time. Machell also supervised the woodworking school at Point Loma. Agricultural



experimentation was essential to the Lomaland community's desire to be self-sufficient in all respects. Katherine Tingley's goal was to serve fresh fruits and vegetables at Lomaland every day of the year. Early agricultural products brought to California by the Theosophists included the avocado.



Lomaland had public buildings for the entire community and several private homes. The home of Albert Spalding, the sporting goods tycoon, was built in 1901. The building combines late-Victorian wooden architecture with historical motifs such as the modified Corinthian column (now shaped like a papyrus leaf) and flattened arches. The amethyst dome was restored by a team of scholars led by Dr. Dwayne Little of the department of History and Political Science in 1983.



The first Greek amphitheater in North America was built on this site in 1901. It was used for sporting events and theatrical performances. The tessellated pavement and stoa were added in 1909. The theatre was the site of a number of productions of Greek and Shakespearean dramas.

The educational arm of Lomaland was the Raja Yoga Academy, also established in 1901. "Raja Yoga" meant divine union, and the educational goals of the school involved not only intellectual formation but also moral and spiritual development. The Raja Yoga Academy was a boarding school; students lived together in group homes that were known as "Lotus Houses."

Cabrillo Hall, which served as the International Center Headquarters, the Brotherhood Headquarters, and "Wachere Crest" building, was completed in 1909. It served as office for the Theosophical Society and as a residence for Katherine Tingley after 1909. It was originally located on the west side of Pepper Tree Lane. Cabrillo Hall is currently the home of the Communication Studies department.



This multi-purpose structure was originally located just southwest of the Academy Building. It served a variety of functions that included telephone and mail services;

in 1908 it was used as a display center for the Woman's Exchange and Mart. The unusual truss design in the interior of the building emphasized the square and the circle, which were symbolic of heaven and earth.

Lomaland dissolved in the aftermath of World War I and was taken over by Fort Rosecrans at some point thereafter. It served as an observation point and several barracks were installed on the site, which constitute some of the campus dormitories today.

In 1952 Balboa University became affiliated with the Southern California Methodist Conference, changed its name to California Western University and relocated to Point Loma. In 1960, the failing Cal Western law school in downtown re-located to Rohr Hall at Point Loma to join the rest of the school. It received accreditation from the American Bar Association in 1962.



In 1968, California Western University changed its name to United States International University (USIU). The law school retained the name Cal Western. USIU moved to Scripps Ranch. In 1973, the law school relocated from its Point Loma location to the current downtown campus and Pasadena College moved to Point Loma to replace it in 1973.