

BARBARA BUTLER ARTIST♦BUILDER INC
Extraordinary play structures & treehouses for kids

Public Use and Residential Projects

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barbara butler

artist♦builder inc

Play Structures Treehouses Play Forts Playhouses Play Accessories

PUBLIC USE

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Company Overview

Barbara Butler Artist-Builder Inc. is a design/build firm specializing in custom, eco-friendly, site-specific play structures and tree houses for children, for public use and residential settings. In 1987, Barbara Butler started the business in San Francisco as a sole proprietor, building unique redwood play structures. In 1999, the business incorporated, becoming Barbara Butler Artist-Builder Inc. Barbara's sister, Suzanne Butler, brother James Butler and husband Jeff Beal joined the business, becoming full-time owners with the company. Sales exceed \$2 million per year.

Barbara Butler Artist-Builder Inc. is located in a 8,000 square foot workshop in South San Francisco. A team of 12 artisans/builders construct, carve and stain the redwood structures that are completely modular and shippable to any point around the world. Over 500 projects to date have taken Barbara and her crew around the country and as far as France and South Korea for installations.

About the designs:

Barbara Butler's designs range from small, carved and stain playhouses to large multi-tiered, multi-towered play environments. The company specializes in artistic projects with challenging terrains, projects with trees, highly custom design requests, sensitive situations, and/or complicated installations. Barbara is committed to working closely with landscape architects and clients to create a safe, stimulating play structure that is integral to the surrounding environment.

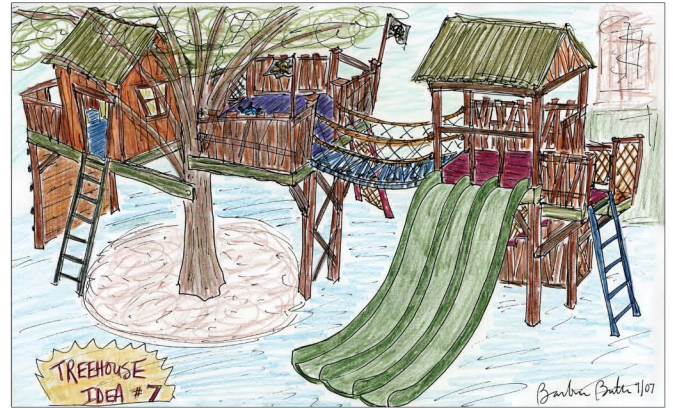
Barbara's goal is to create play spaces that combine opportunities for physical and imaginative play. The play structures are designed as series of small creative environments. These small environments are linked with engaging transitions (bridges, slides, catwalks) that encourage kids to play-act as well as run around and exert themselves. Barbara concentrates on designing "loops of play" to keep kids moving throughout the playground.

Safety is the top priority. Barbara Butler is a National Certified Playground Safety Inspector. Every custom public use structure is audited by Barbara and by an independent third-party consultant to attest to its compliance with the ASTM Standard F-1487-07 for public playground equipment and the ADA Handicap Accessible Guidelines.

Excellent examples of unique play structures include the Pirate Ship commissioned for the Ritz Carlton West Palm Beach Hotel and the four play structures, including a handicap accessible treehouse, commissioned for The Children's Park in Town Square, Las Vegas. In early 2009, Barbara installed a custom play structure for the City of San Juan Capistrano's historic Los Rios Park.

Barbara Butler's work has been commissioned by Robert Redford, Will Smith and Kevin Kline among others. Her work has been featured in Architectural Digest, Child, People, The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal. A wide selection of her play creations are highlighted in The Treehouse Book by Peter Nelson. Barbara was featured on the prestigious HGTV's Modern Masters.





Roughhouse Treehouse

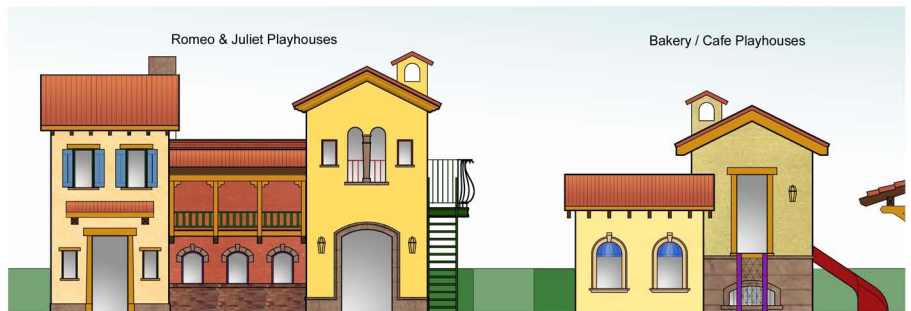
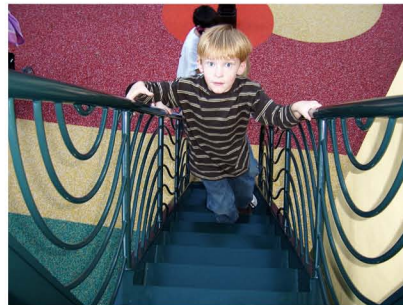
Turnberry Town Square Children's Park
Las Vegas, Nevada

Roughhouse Treehouse is a public use handicap accessible treehouse. It is one of four play structures designed by Barbara Butler for the Turnberry Town Square Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. First Barbara worked with Turnberry and Environmental Design to find a live tree that could be transplanted to Las Vegas for the treehouse. The team traveled to Texas to make the final selection. Once transplanted, Barbara Butler did an on-site "stickout" to create a design that works with the tree limbs and that could be pre-fabricated in the workshop. After allowing the tree several months to acclimate, the Barbara Butler team returned to install the modular structure around the tree. Roughhouse Treehouse has a rustic, "Tom Sawyer" style with "wicky-wacky" siding, multiple levels, rock climbing wall and hand-woven rope net railings on the swinging bridge. Multiple tree limbs break through the deck and walls. The tree is thriving and the treehouse is a favorite with the kids.



Play Structures Treehouses Play Forts Playhouses Play Accessories

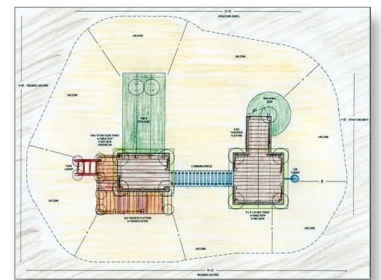
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Stucco Playhouses

Turnberry Town Square Children's Park
Las Vegas, Nevada

The Stucco Playhouses are at the heart of the Turnberry Town Square Children's Park in Las Vegas, Nevada. Barbara Butler worked with Project Architect Alan J. Mayer to create an Old World European look to emulate the surrounding buildings of Town Square. The Stucco Playhouses are fabricated with redwood interiors and trims, stucco exteriors with Spanish clay tile roofs, faux stone chimney and wrought iron balconies & stairs. In spite of tight deadlines and a logistically difficult installation, the Children's Park was ready for the November, 2007 grand opening. The Children's Park opened to great acclaim and continues to draw thousands of visitors a day.



Los Rios Play Structure

Los Rios Historic Park
San Juan Capistrano, CA

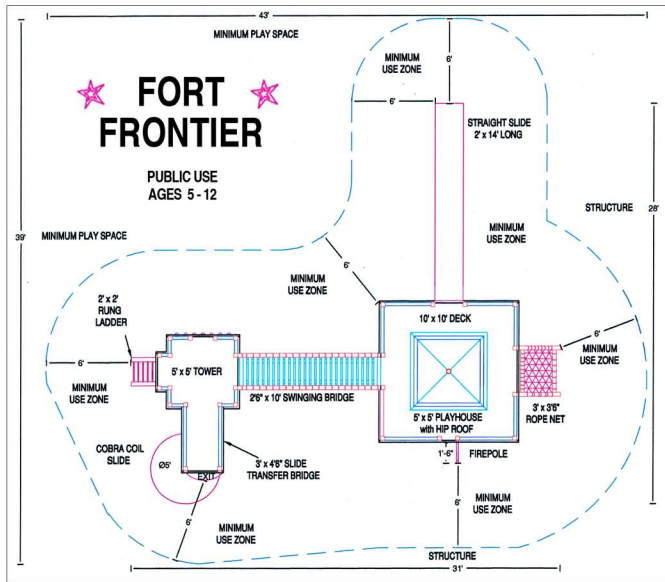
10 years in the planning, the City of San Juan Capistrano began construction for the Los Rios Historic Park in October, 2008. David Voltz Designs had approached Barbara Butler in 2006 to design a play structure that would complement the historic buildings and the park setting, while being sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood. The Los Rios district is the oldest residential neighborhood west of the Mississippi, starting with the establishment of the Mission in 1776. The Los Rios Play Structure opened to the public in May 2009.

For more details, see *"Case Study: Los Rios Play Structure"* at the end of the project sheets.



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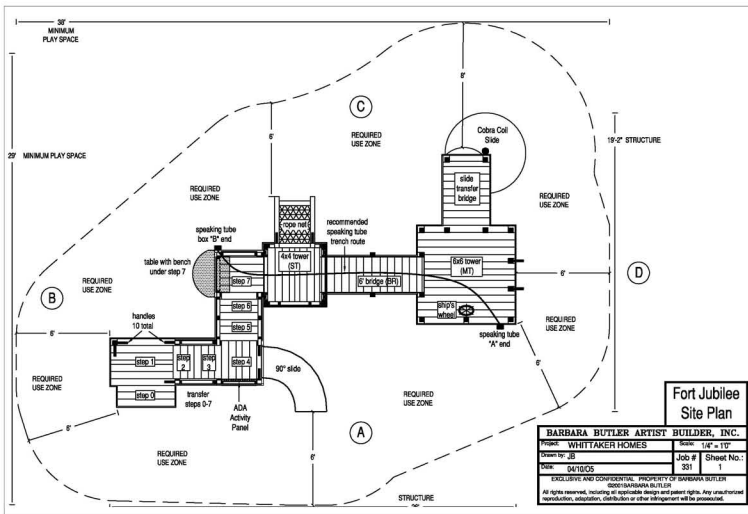
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Fort Frontier

WaterColor Inn and Resort
Fort Walton Beach, Florida

Fort Frontier was designed for the WaterColor Inn & Resort located on Florida's Gulf Coast. Watercolor's Arvida Design Team called Barbara in to design/build a custom play structure for Camp WaterColor, a recreation area dedicated for kids. Barbara worked with the Arvida Team to develop a color palette that blended with the surroundings and a design that would provide multiple play opportunities: 2 towers, large wrap-around deck, straight & spiral slides, swinging bridge, rock climbing and more.



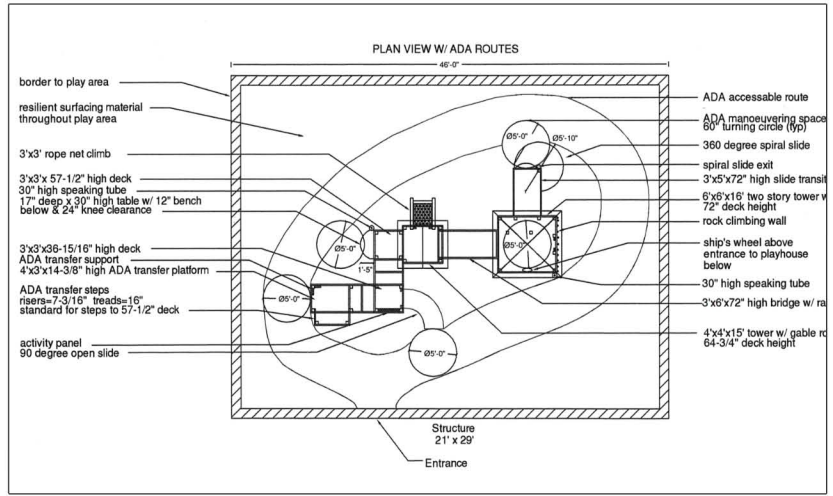
Fort Jubilee
The New Town at St. Charles
St. Louis, Missouri

Fort Jubilee is one of four play structures designed and built for New Town at St. Charles, a traditional town designed and developed by Whittaker Homes. The design team's goal was to create a town reminiscent of the past where children can ride their bikes to the general store and residents can walk to the local coffee shop. Barbara Butler's play structure design blends the old-fashioned appeal of wood with a modern design that meets all ADA and public use playground requirements. Situated in front of the Community Center for the town, Fort Jubilee has become a great meeting spot for kids.



Play Structures Treehouses Play Forts Playhouses Play Accessories

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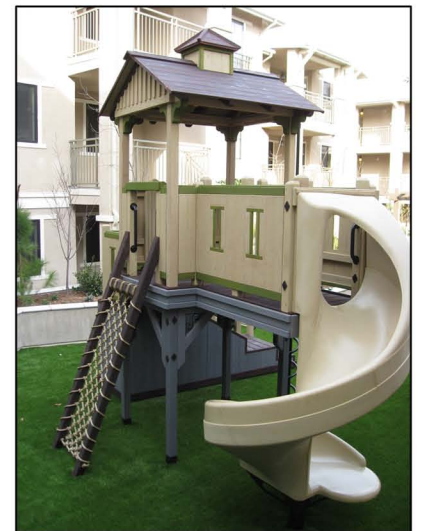
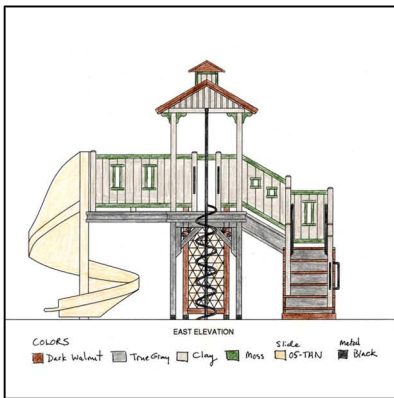
Fort Saratoga
Saratoga Springs Resort
Orlando, Florida

Walt Disney Imagineering commissioned Barbara to design a public use and ADA handicap accessible custom play structure for the Saratoga Springs Resort in Walt Disney World. Barbara's goal was to create a play structure that reflected the look of the surrounding buildings and provided a high level of playability. Barbara Butler was brought onto the project to work with Glover-Smith-Bode Inc., the Architect of Record, to develop a set of plans that met all applicable codes and could be revised for additional Disney venues.



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Glendale Gardens
Gardens on Garfield
Los Angeles, CA

Glendale Gardens play structure was commissioned by Thomas Safran & Associates for their latest project in Glendale, California. For over 35 years, Thomas Safran & Associates have specialized in developing premier affordable housing projects, many of which have won awards from prestigious organizations. Thomas' challenge to Barbara was to create a warm and vibrant play structure that did not overpower the small courtyard and that would complement the craftsman style architecture around it. Barbara made sure the design met all applicable ADA and ASTM standards. The Glendale Gardens play structure is scheduled to be installed in January 2010 and opens to the public in February 2010.



Play Structures Treehouses Play Forts Playhouses Play Accessories

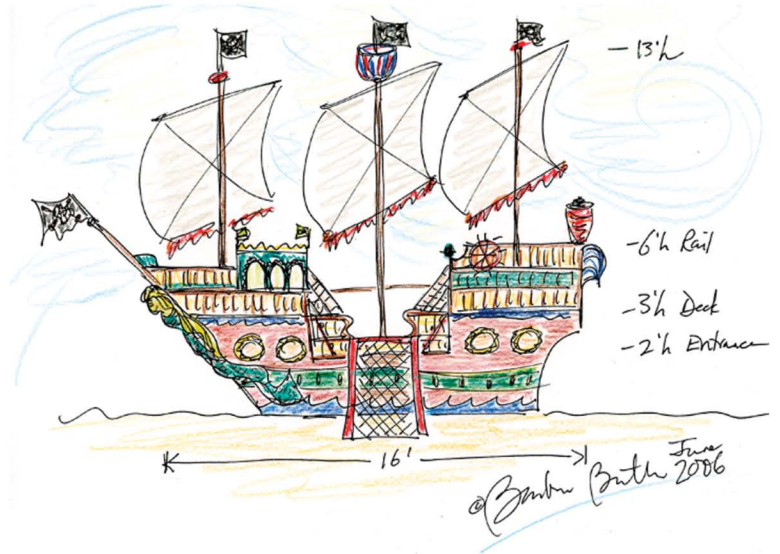
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Fort Kinderstube

842 Key Route Blvd
Albany, CA

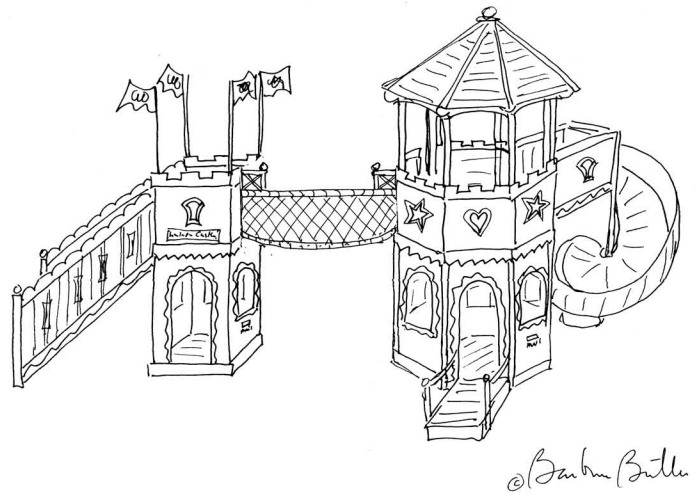
Fort Kinderstube was designed and built for Bay Area Kinderstube, an East Bay German language-immersion preschool with a limited budget and a small, odd-shaped space. In addition to the main play structure, Barbara designed and built a small tree perch with rope railings, a sandbox boat with curved sides and a 5-sided, low height stage that fits snugly into a corner of the yard. The entire play space was transformed into a multi-use playground.



Pirate Ship

Ritz Carlton Hotel
West Palm Beach, Florida

Pirate Ship was designed and built for the Ritz Carlton Hotel in West Palm Beach, Florida. The London-based owners called to request a nautical-themed play structure for the 2 to 5 year old age range that would fit in a very small space. Barbara realized that with such restricted space, the key was to design a structure with very rich and elaborate details. The resulting Pirate Ship playhouse has entrance decks, captain's quarters, ship's ladder, rope net ladder, and rock climbing for play activities. In addition, there are numerous decorative details to stimulate imaginative play, including carved spindle railings, porthole openings, faux stern lanterns, a crow's nest and an elaborate, hand-carved & stained lion masthead that reflects the Ritz Carlton's logo.



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Larkspur Castle

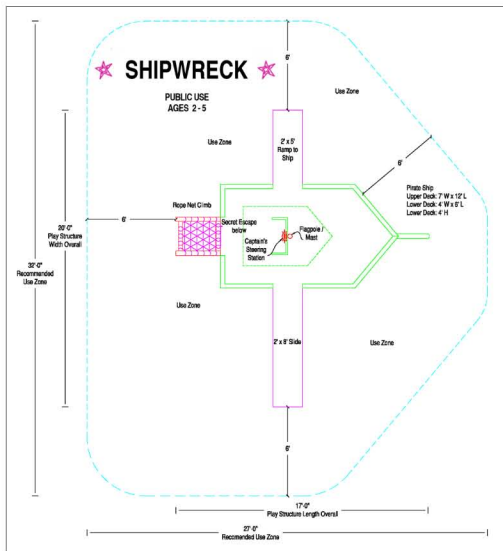
Larkspur Community
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Larkspur Castle was designed and built for the award-winning Zinn Design Build's Larkspur Community, located in Chapel Hill North Carolina. The wood structure is made with all FSC certified redwood and stained with Barbara Butler's own non-toxic environmentally-friendly tung oil stains. The design meets public use playground safety requirements and can be expanded to add an ADA handicap accessible transfer platform access point. As with all Barbara Butler play structures, the upkeep and maintenance has been designed to be simple and affordable.



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The Lighthouse and The Shipwreck
 Duck's Nest Preschool Campuses
 Berkeley and Oakland, CA

The Lighthouse and the Shipwreck were designed and built for Duck's Nest preschool. The lighthouse is a 2-story Octagon Playhouse with a wraparound deck, portal windows and a copper roof. Play features include a rope net ladder, super slide and two rung ladders. The Shipwreck has fanciful carvings, a captain's helm, and a smiling, hand-carved Mermaid attached to the ship's bow. Entrance to the lower level is through the giant hole caused by the ship crashing into rocks.



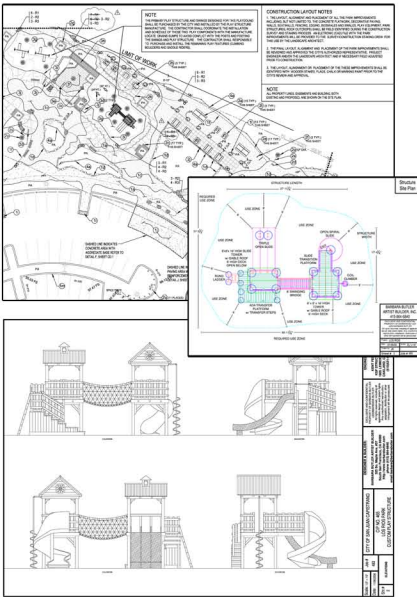
Summerhouse Playhouse

Children's Garden: Turtle Bay Exploration Park
Redding, CA

The Summerhouse is a single-story public use playhouse designed and built for the extraordinary Turtle Bay Exploration Park Children's Garden in Redding, CA. Summerhouse Playhouse has a single-layered tongue & groove roof, curved-top door & window openings, built-in interior corner seats and hand-carved & stained tulips on all four sides.

Barbara Butler is selected to design a unique, rustic play structure for historic Los Rios Park

Los Rios Play Structure * 2-Bay Swing set



Phase 1: Conceptual Design

Barbara meets with the Los Rios Park design team in San Juan Capistrano for a 2-day design intensive. The team works together to design the centerpiece for the historic park’s renovation: a play structure that will complement the restored historic buildings and the character of the surrounding historic neighborhood. The Los Rios district is the oldest residential neighborhood west of the Mississippi, starting with the establishment of The Mission in 1776.

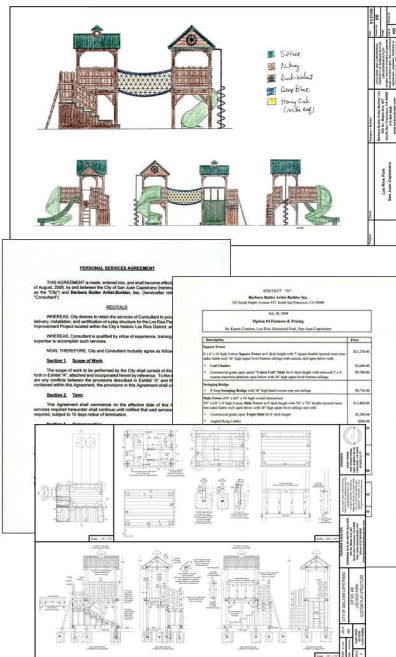
Back at the studio, Barbara starts the process of fitting everything into the space. The goal during the conceptual design phase is to create a design that not only meets aesthetic requirements but also meets the ASTM safety standards for public use playgrounds and the ADA Handicap Accessible guidelines, all within the client’s budget and time frame.

Barbara develops two design options to present to the Los Rios design team. Each option has a detailed plan view drawing with dimensions and play features, scaled elevations, and Features & Pricing with the rough budget. After several discussions, Barbara incorporates the changes to create a third option that is approved by all.



Phase 2: Design Approval

Once the design is set, Barbara returns to the site do a layout using rough sticks laid flat on the ground. This gives everyone a good idea of size and shape, and to confirm that there is sufficient room for circulation and the required safety “use zone”. Barbara’s team also coordinates with the landscape contractor to make sure that the play area will be prepared correctly.



Phase 3: Construction Documents

With the conceptual design approved, Barbara Butler Artist-Builder Inc. signs a construction agreement with the City of San Juan Capistrano. The next step is the preparation of the construction documents. Barbara, with her brother and business partner James Butler, prepare the AutoCAD drawings.

The Construction Documents include a detailed plot plan with required use zone, foundation plan with footings, floor plans, exterior elevations, key cross-sections, framing & siding plans and construction details. Barbara also hand-colors in the elevations to show her selections for the custom tung oil stain colors.

These documents are reviewed by our structural engineer for compliance to the ASTM structural integrity requirements, as well to local building codes. Then the construction documents are reviewed by a third-party playground safety consultant to ensure that all parts meet the ASTM and CPSC safety codes for playground equipment for public use.

Los Rios Play Structure * 2-Bay Swing set



Phase 4: Fabrication

Once the Construction Documents are completed and approved, fabrication at the Barbara Butler Artist-Builder Inc. workshop begins. The redwood lumber is selected, planed and grinded smooth on both sides to prevent splinters. In the Building Bay, Barbara's crew of skilled builders fabricates the play structure in modular pieces. Special details are carved as well. Custom hardware is fabricated in our in-house Metal Shop, such as the steel tubes that form the core of the double-bay swing sets. Then the fabricated modular panels and pieces are brought to the Stain Bay. There the custom stains are mixed from dry artist pigment, natural tung-oil and a low-odor solvent, creating a stain that is non-toxic when dry and safe for use around children. The rich, vibrant stains are brushed on by hand, then rubbed into the wood and left to dry for several days. A second coat of clear tung oil is applied as well for extra protection of the wood.

Next we assemble the play structure in our Detailing Bay, making sure that all parts fit perfectly before shipping. The crew adds railings, rock holds, trims, roofs and bridges. We hand-weave the rope railings and assemble the slides. All possible details are covered before we disassemble the play structure and make it ready for shipping.



Phase 5: Delivery & Installation

For the Los Rios Playground, the pieces are "blanket-wrapped" and delivered by truck. For international deliveries, the pieces are crated, shipped via ocean container to the nearest port, and then delivered by truck to the site.

The pieces are hand-carried onto the site or the crates are delivered via a giant crane. Once all pieces are unloaded on site, Barbara's crew lays out the forms to mark the footing locations and to dig the posthole footings. Then the modular pieces are erected, held over the footing holes with massive braces. This system allows the workers to fully assemble the play structure before the concrete is poured. After the concrete has cured, the braces are removed and a final coat of clear tung oil is applied. The landscape contractor installs the resilient surfacing around the play structure and Barbara's crew attaches the safety signs.



Phase 6: Certification

Prior to the Grand Opening of the Los Rios park, an independent playground safety consultant team is brought in by Barbara to review the play structure and the installation to ensure that everything has been done correctly and in compliance with all the playground safety standards. This includes the ASTM, CPSC and ADA accessibility standards. The Los Rios Play area receives a 100% on the final report and is ready for the children!



Barbara Butler is selected to design 4 unique playhouses for the newest Turnberry Life-style Center:

Bakery-Cafe Playhouse * Romeo & Juliet Stucco Playhouses * Kid's Theater * Roughhouse Treehouse



Month 1:

Barbara flies to Las Vegas for a 2-day design intensive meeting with the Turnberry team to create four distinct play areas for The Children's Park, which is to be the centerpiece of Town Square Las Vegas. The space is a flat, empty stretch of dirt & sand. Together, Barbara and the Turnberry Team conceptually design:

- two stucco playhouses to compliment the architecture of Town Square,
- a Kids' Theater and
- a Treehouse. Priority #1: find a tree for the treehouse.

Barbara returns to San Francisco to work on completing the Stucco Playhouse designs while the turnberry Team, Environmental Design, starts the search for a living tree that can be transplanted successfully to Las Vegas to hold the treehouse.



Month 2:

Barbara gets the word that a tree has been found! A grove of southern live oaks in Texas must be relocated. The trees have already been dug up with the root ball intact and "potted". Alan Mayer, the project architect, and Barbara fly to Texas to select the biggest and the best for their treehouse. The tree will be transported from Texas to Las Vegas on a large truck especially designed for the job, a journey of many miles!



Month 3:

The tree is delivered to Town Square and transplanted successfully. Barbara & James arrive with scrap lumber to "stick-out" the treehouse design, fine-tuning it to the tree limbs. They take photos and precise measurements of the tree and the treehouses so it can be modularly constructed in their South San Francisco shop. The tree must rest in its new environment for several months before the treehouse can be installed.

In the meantime, Barbara's team completes the AutoCAD Construction drawings for the Stucco Playhouses and the Kids Theater.



Month 4:

Back in the shop, Barbara and crew start construction of the treehouse clubhouse and the 2 stucco playhouses.

- Clubhouse: The slat siding is specifically set at "wicky-wacky" angles for a rustic "Tom Sawyer" look.
- Stucco Playhouses: The framing and inside lumber is fabricated from the usual all natural redwood lumber, grinded smooth and finished with a non-toxic tung oil stain in bright colors. The outside will be stuccoed and painted on site.

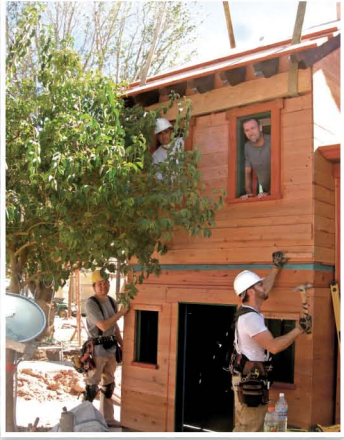


Month 5: Time for the Romeo & Juliet Double Stucco Playhouses to be shipped to Las Vegas. It takes four big rigs to transport all the playhouses.



Barbara and crew crane the houses from their shop dock onto the big rigs. Each of the playhouse sections have been carefully boarded & crated to ensure their survival on the long journey to Las Vegas.

Then Barbara and crew meet the trucks in Las Vegas to help crane the houses into position.



Month 5 (continued):
The playhouse sections were carefully craned into position and secured together. The stucco team came next to apply the plaster coats and the faux stone work. The painters followed, adding the warm colors.



Month 6:
Then the roofing crew installed the Spanish clay tiles, while Barbara and crew installed the Kid's theater and the Treehouse.



Ship's Ladder



Juliet Balcony



Coil Climber



Window Shutters



Bakery Slide

Month 7:
Once the Pebbleflex safety surfacing was installed, Barbara & crew returned to add the final decorative and fun play features. The 3rd Party Certification is completed just in time for the Town Square Grand Opening.

THE FINISHED PLAY STRUCTURES:



The Roughhouse Treehouse



The Stucco Playhouses: Romeo & Juliet and The Bakery/Cafe



The Town Square Theater

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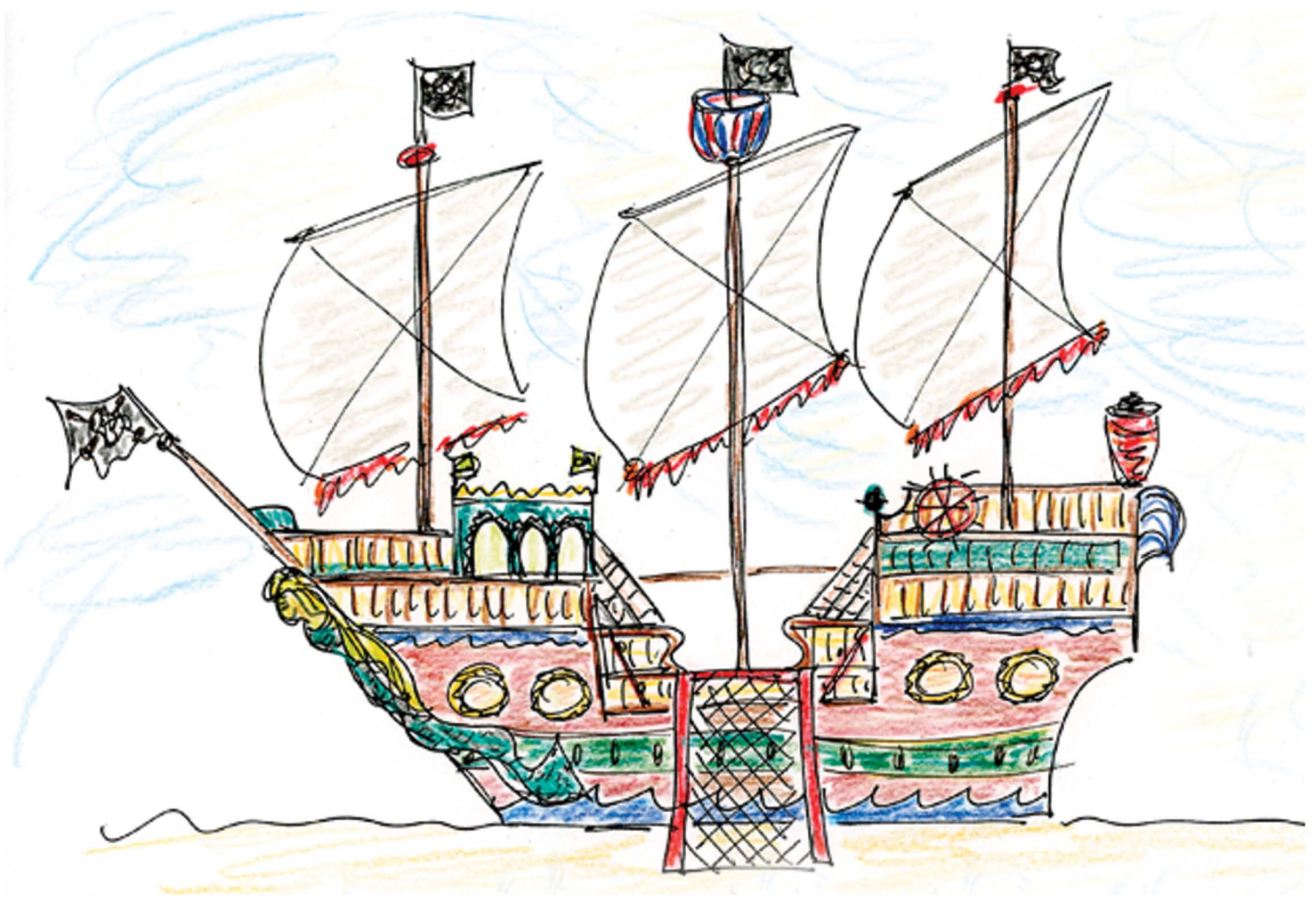
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