



THE CAPITAL

"Preserving Santa Barbara's historic sites of enduring community value"

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PEARL CHASE SOCIETY DECEMBER & JANUARY SCHEDULED MEETINGS OF INTEREST

PEARL CHASE SOCIETY

Board Meetings are typically held the first Thursday of the month at the MacVeagh House on the grounds of the Natural History Museum. Next meetings: December 3 and January 7.

Preservation Committee Meetings are usually held the fourth Friday of the month at Wood Glen Hall, 3010 Foothill Road. Next meetings will be held December 18 and January 22 at 11 am.

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

City meetings are broadcast live on City TV channel 18 and streamed live at www.santabarbaraca.gov/Government/Video, where they are also archived and viewable on demand.

City Council Meetings are held on Tuesdays at 2 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall: December 1, 8, 15, 22, and January 5, 12, 19, 26.

Planning Commission Meetings are held on the first, second and third Thursdays of the month at 1 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall: December 3, 10, 17. January 7, 14, 21.

Historic Landmarks Commission Meetings are held every other Wednesday at 1:30 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street: December 2, 16 and January 13, 27.

Architectural Board of Review Meetings are held Mondays at 3 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. (Note: Consent calendar meetings are held every Monday at 1 pm.) Full Board meets on December 7, 21 and January TBD.

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

County Board of Supervisor Meetings and Planning Commission meetings are broadcast live on CSBT20. They are also streamed at www.countyofsb.org/ceo/media02.aspx, where they are also archived and viewable on demand.

County Board of Supervisors Meetings are held on three Tuesdays of the month at 9 am. The first and third meetings are held in Santa Barbara in the Board of Supervisors Hearing Room, 105 East Anapamu St., 4th Floor. The second meeting is (typically) held in Santa Maria at 511 East Lakeside Parkway. December 8 (SB); December 15 (SM); January 5 (SB); January 12 (SM).

County Planning Commission Meetings are held three Wednesdays of the month at 9 am. The first and third meetings are held in Santa Barbara at 123 East Anapamu Street, Room 17, and the second meeting is (typically) held in Santa Maria at 511 East Lakeside Parkway: December 2 (SB), December 9 (SM), January TBD.

County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission Meetings are held the second Monday of the month at 10 am at 123 East Anapamu, Room 17 (unless specified otherwise): December 14, January 11.

Society News and Notes *by Kelly Mahan*

Happy Holidays from the Pearl Chase Society Board of Directors! This is a great time to reflect on the accomplishments of the board over the past year, and look at goals for 2016. At November's PCS board meeting, directors discussed continuing plans to help save the Franceschi House, with board members giving updates on what has transpired since the Society launched a campaign to save the property. The goal now is to convince the City of Santa Barbara that preserving the home is a much better, and more affordable, option than demolishing it. Board member and architect Steve Dowty has put together a preliminary report which outlines necessary repairs, and their associated costs. The Society board will likely meet with City leaders in the beginning of the year to outline the non-demolition option.

For Society members who have yet to sign the online petition to help save the home, visit www.tinyurl.com/save-franceschi.

Plans for the 2016 Historic Homes Tour continue, with the board considering seven preliminary homes to be used on the tour. The homes, which have yet to be formerly chosen, are a mix of cottages (including four Moody cottages) and estates, giving variety to this year's tour. We'll have lots more information about the tour, as well as its date, in upcoming editions of *The Capital*.

The next board meetings are scheduled for Thursday, December 3, and Thursday, January 7.

INSIDE, PAGE 3 *Learn more about Franceschi House*



Cristina Fenzi Franceschi, in a photo dated 1920



Ernestina, Dr. Francesco Franceschi's eldest daughter, in a photo taken in 1920

(Photos courtesy Fenzi Family Archive)

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PRESERVATION WATCH

By Kellam de Forest

(Initiated by popular request, Preservation Watch informs Pearl Chase Society members of community projects that may disturb historical structures and features, explains community preservation efforts, and/or lists opportunities for public input for those concerned with a particular issue.)

Franceschi House: We've got 662 petition signers to reject the demolition of Franceschi House as of November 21. Help us get to 1,000 by December 31, 2015. The Pearl Chase Board is obtaining estimates on the costs to mothball the structure. The historic Sheffield Filtration Building on Mountain Drive was mothballed in 2006 when the reservoir was replaced with underground tanks. Although there were those who argued for its demolition, the Society encouraged the City to mothball this historic, castle-like building, pending a use for the interior. Mothballing is less expensive than demolition.

Susan Chamberlin reports that there is a strategic plan titled the Franceschi Park Master Plan that was adopted by the Parks and Recreation Department in 2004. Utilizing the house is part of the plan. Could the Master Plan be modified, mothballing would fit the Master Plan.

Casa Dorinda: On October 21, the Montecito Planning Commission reviewed revised plans for a new CUP and mitigated negative declaration. The hearing was continued to December 3 for more information, especially on impacts to historic and biological resources and to transportation issues. It is hoped that the original 1918 entrance bridge could be reconstructed.

Lockwood de Forest Jr. home and garden, 2659 Todos Santos Lane: An application to the HLAC to designate the home and garden a County Landmark is being written. Property has not sold yet.

Barnsdall Rio Grande gas station: Goleta Mayor Paula Perotte reports that Bill Mendel, Ty Warner's assistant, says Ty Warner Resorts will make sure the gas station is protected from the predicted winter storms.

Heath Ranch Park and Adobe, 3122 Chaparral Drive, Carpinteria: There is to be a special meeting of the Carpinteria Tree Advisory Board about the fate of the historic eucalyptus trees; date and time to be announced. These trees are the remains of an allee of Blue Gum Eucalyptus trees that Russell Heath obtained from fellow rancher Elwood Cooper circa 1875. Cooper thought the trees could be a reliable lumber source that grew well in our climate. They turned out not be a source of lumber but have become an iconic feature of the Southern California landscape. He imported them from Australia to his 2,000-acre ranch in Goleta.

Moody Sisters Cottage, 170 Middle Road: Neighbor's appeal is in the negotiating stage. Neighbor feels the second story element will impact the privacy of his backyard. The landmarked Moody Cottage is not an issue.

600 block of State Street, center of block on east side sidewalk: HLC on November 17, 2015 unanimously approved relocating the brick bench sculpture to a paved area on west side of the train station near the private car. The placement of this twenty-first century structure near the historic station, in my opinion, will detract from its historic ambience. One would not place such a structure adjacent to the Old Mission or on the Courthouse grounds.

Juarez Hosmer Adobe: Dr. Glenn Russell (Director of County P&D) reported that the rehabilitation work is complete on the Hosmer Adobe and that all

—continued on next page.

Newsletter

Kelly Mahan, *editor*

DanLevin.com, *graphics*

PCS Board Members, *distribution*

Printing Impressions, *press*

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The Women of Franceschi House, Part I

by Rick Closson

Editor's note: *Dr. Closson, past president of the Society and the founding editor of The Capital, has graciously volunteered to give us a historical context on the Franceschi House. This is the third in a series of historic articles about the storied estate.*

While the common story of Franceschi House and Park centers on the men who inspired and donated the property to the City, the inevitable sustaining players included the women important in their lives. Both Dr. Francesco Franceschi [née Emanuele Fenzi] and Alden Freeman owed tremendous personal debts to family women.

Cristina Fenzi [1851-1927]. The woman who would become Cristina Fenzi began as, well, Cristina Fenzi. She was the second of six daughters to Emanuele's uncle Sebastiano; a cousin in the aristocratic and prosperous Fenzi clan. Cristina married Emanuele in Florence in 1870; she was 19 years old, he was 27 with a law degree but able to pursue his primary interests in botany, traveling and writing due to the wealth and position of the family. Three years later their first daughter, Ernestina, was born followed by Teresina [1875] and Carlo [1876].

This was a time of tremendous Italian national turmoil. Historically the Italian peninsula had been a collection of semi-independent states. Banking was regionalized and buffeted by political changes. On the heels of Italian Unification ["Risorgimento"], the "Long

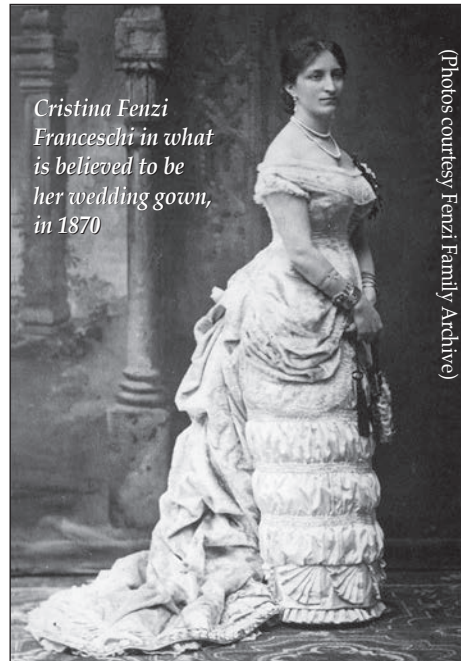
Depression" hit Western Europe and the United States [1873-1896]. In 1881 Cristina's husband was thrust into a leadership role in Banco Fenzi by the death of their uncle Carlo from diphtheria.

During this tumult were born the final Fenzi children, Enzo [1880], Cammillo [1889] and Franco [1890]. It was undoubtedly a busy household. By the time Franco was born, his eldest sister Ernestina was grown at 17 and

pursuing her father's interest in horticulture. The younger children were 15, 14, 10 and 1 year old. Cristina's husband Emanuele was consumed with the troubles of the family banking business. Two years later Banco Fenzi was forced to close, ending the family's financial stability and damaging its reputation.

In 1892 Cristina and Emanuele made a momentous decision; she was 41 years old with six children as young as two years. She would maintain the family household in Florence with the children while he traveled to America to establish their new life. She and the children would follow when his situation was right. For the next decade, Cristina raised the children alone, amid her own family and that of Emanuele's, while he struggled to establish his landscaping business in

Santa Barbara. Finally the timing was right and Cristina traveled to Santa Barbara with Ernestina [now 30 and unmarried], Cammillo [14 years old] and Franco [13]. Staying behind in Italy were Teresina [28] and Carlo [27],



Cristina Fenzi Franceschi in what is believed to be her wedding gown, in 1870

(Photos courtesy Fenzi Family Archive)

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the County conditions for both the adobe and the water tower have been met. Historian Alex Cole oversaw the project to ensure compliance. The adobe can be viewed through a wrought iron fence on San Ysidro Road. It is on private property and is not open to the public.

Thanks to the owner for acceding to the insistence of the Pearl Chase Society that this County Landmark was rehabilitated using as much of the historic material as possible.

1424 State Street: Mary Louise Days points out the history of this corner. The parcel was, in the first decades of the 1900s, a plant nursery. In 1933 a cash and carry market designed by Carlton Winslow was built. From 1939 to 1957 it was Jordano's. The building was enlarged

with an addition to the south in 1972 to become Home Savings and Loan. The fountain and garden were added at that time. No further news on the request by the owner to remove all the Coral trees and the lemon gum eucalyptus trees from the property.

Miramar: MBAR gave final approval to the architecture and landscape plans. The Board liked the project, but felt the design of the buildings lacked variety, especially those facing the ocean. There were those who felt that the project, which contains three large two-story buildings, did not fit the definition of a cottage hotel such as El Encanto and the San Ysidro Ranch. The historic gateposts are to be installed at the walkway that crosses the railroad tracks.



The Pearl Chase Society

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The Women of Franceschi House

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both unmarried, and Fenzo [23 and married in 1905].

Ernestina may have chosen to emigrate to America with her mother and two brothers to help with establishing the new household. Undoubtedly she also followed her own enthusiasm for horticulture and the chance to be part of her father's endeavors. She would return to Italy with her mother and father in 1913 and move to Libya with them, continuing to work on the government agriculture project after their deaths.

In 1903 Cristina Fenzi Franceschi bought 40 acres of land on a barren hillside above Santa Barbara with money she'd brought from Italy. In 1905 she took out a building permit in her own name to have their two-bedroom home built. She quickly realized the need for more bedrooms and in 1907 four were added with a second floor. For the next decade she raised the children while Emanuele tended to the landscaping business, conducted experiments acclimatizing exotic plants to the southern California environment, and writing scientific papers on his results.

In 1913 Cristina returned to Italy with Emanuele and Ernestina and then to Tripoli, Libya, where they had been offered the opportunity to develop sustainable crops in the new colony. Cristina Fenzi Franceschi died in 1927, four years after her husband of 53 years, Dr. Francesco Franceschi passed away in Tripoli. Both are buried there. Ernestina stayed in Libya working on their agriculture project. She died in 1968.

In the next edition of *The Capital*, we'll feature part II of the Women of Franceschi House.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

by Maureen Masson

PCS Renewals for October & November '15

Don and Terri Bennett

Marty and Joe Blum

Mary Louise Days

Dee Duncan & Steve Dowty

Kristina W. Foss

Margaret Gallant

City of Santa Barbara (Nicole Hernandez)

Michael Hoefler

Linn Howell

Karl and Nancy Hutterer

Ann Libecap

Emma and David Malina

Maureen M. Masson

Patti Ottoboni

James Smith

Lesley Wiscomb

Note: Membership in the Pearl Chase Society provides the opportunity to be a part of an important organization dedicated to preserving sites of enduring value in and around Santa Barbara.