

THE CAPITAL

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

Vol. 25, No. 11 • www.PearlChaseSociety.org • November 2022

NOVEMBER MEETINGS OF INTEREST

PEARL CHASE SOCIETY

The November PCS Board of Directors meeting will be held at the Main-Begg farmhouse at 5001 Hollister Ave., Goleta; 3:30 to 5:30 PM on Thursday November 3, 2022. Parking is limited so carpooling is encouraged.

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

City Council Public Comment and Participating Online

City Council chambers are now open to the public for in-person meetings, or you have the option to participate electronically: 1) via telephone: Call (805) 564-5301 and leave your name, return phone number and the number of the item you wish to speak on. You will be called back during the meeting and will have the chance to make your statement then. 2) you may participate in the Zoom meeting that may be accessed [HERE](#).

City meetings are broadcast live on City TV channel 18 and streamed live [HERE](#), where they are also archived and viewable on demand.

City Council

Tuesdays at 2 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall: November 1, 8, 15

Planning Commission

First, second and third Thursdays of the month at 1 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall: November 3, 10, 17

Historic Landmarks Commission

Every other Wednesday at 1:30 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street: November 9, 23

Architectural Board of Review

Mondays at 3 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. Full Board meets November 14, 28

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

County Board of Supervisor Meetings and Planning Commission meetings are broadcast live on CSBTv20. They are also streamed live [HERE](#) where they are also archived and viewable on demand.

County Board of Supervisors

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. November 1 (SB), November 29 (SM)

County Planning Commission

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. November 2 (SB), November 9 (SM)

County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

Second Monday of the month at 10 am at 123 East Anapamu, Room 17 (unless specified otherwise). November 14

Some Thoughts on Historic Preservation at Work

By Cheri Rae

It had been some years since I've been to a hearing in front of the [Historic Landmarks Commission](#). But when the blue notice arrived in the mail about an upcoming hearing over an unpermitted structure on a historic property across the street from my home, it was time to get involved. I dutifully did my research and carefully composed an email sent to the HLC Secretary for distribution to Commissioners. Then I rescheduled my appointments so I could attend the hearing and wrote out my public comments.

It's no small task to do all of this, but maintaining the historic character of a neighborhood, of a city, doesn't just happen, it works according to plan. As I arrived at 630 Garden Street, I felt a sense of gratitude that years ago, city leaders had the foresight to establish a special body dedicated to preserving and protecting historic resources in our community.

The hearing room for the Historic Landmarks Commission, and several other important review boards, is named for David Gebhard as the plaque on the wall notes. The distinguished "Architectural Historian, Preservationist and Educator" once chaired the commission and authored many fine literary works. His wide array of accomplishments were recorded in his obituary that appeared in the [New York Times](#).

Surely his spirit surely lingers, reminding today's commissioners, applicants and concerned citizens to come together in a thoughtful way for the good of all.

I dutifully filled out the request to speak at public comment and sat quietly observing the proceedings scheduled before the agenda item of my concern. Anticipating my two-minute time to speak, I nervously waited, hoping my words would be well-received and make a positive difference.

Commissioners listened carefully to presentations and comments, thoughtfully examined plans, asked questions, and made suggestions with professional insight, courtesy, and tact. The whole experience was a meaningful reminder that in this community, individual voices are heard, historical integrity still matters, and decisions can still be made with civility and respect according to standards set many years ago.



Want to get involved, or have submissions for The Capital? Email us at PCS@pearlchasesociety.org.

PEARL CHASE SOCIETY Board of Directors

President

Steve Dowty

Vice President

Dennis Whelan

Secretary

Barbara Boyd

Treasurer

Nate Cultice

Historian

Patti Ottoboni

Board Members

Emma Brinkman

Tina Foss

Maureen Masson

Christine Neuhauser

Kitty Peri

Cheri Rae

Members Emeriti

Sue Adams

Bob Baum

Roger Horton

Barbara Lowenthal

Please direct inquiries
and comments to:

PEARL CHASE SOCIETY
P.O. Box 92121
Santa Barbara, CA 93190-2121
For information, call
(805) 961-3938

Newsletter

Cheri Rae, *editor*

Lisa DeSpain, *graphics*

Materials published in The Capital are copyrighted by The Pearl Chase Society and may be reproduced only with the written permission of the editor.

Pearl Chase and The Scorpio Club

By Cheri Rae

There seems like just enough truth in astrology that makes you wonder: Is it just fun diversion, or does it mean anything? Count Pearl in the skeptical latter group, but she identified with it enough that she used her sun sign as the criteria for membership in her exclusive club. And there is something about the Scorpios and leadership that's undeniable. Community leaders who were not born under the sign of Scorpio often asked Pearl for special exception so they could be part of the club. She never made an exception.

Astrologers tell us that those born under the sign of Scorpio are ambitious, hard-working, strong, confident, passionate, and determined. Powerful. Straightforward. Authentic. Honest. Scorpios are considered astute, intuitive, and laser-like in their ability to detect a note of falseness or deception. Above all, they are born leaders.

The high standards Scorpios set for themselves extend to high expectations of others. When colleagues or co-workers fall short, they may interpret the Scorpio's demands as intolerant, bossy, and controlling. The disapproval—expressed in words, actions and attitude—experienced by those who are on the receiving end, can sting.

If anyone well-schooled in astrology had to guess Pearl's sun sign, they would choose Scorpio. And they would be correct. Her November 16th birthday placed her unambiguously in the zodiac sign that spans from October 23rd to November 22nd.

Although she expressed a natural skepticism about astrology, it didn't override her characteristic enthusiasm when she came up with a novel idea. When it occurred to Pearl that she shared her Scorpio tendencies with many other women of Santa Barbara—she formed a club: The Scorpio Club.

It came to her in November of 1942, when her friend Edith Hancock, the first female City Council Member of Santa Barbara, was looking forward to celebrating her 46th birthday. Edith was dismayed, however, when her physician husband was called out of town, and she lamented the fact she would be alone on her special day. When Pearl got wind of her friend's disappointment, she invited Edith to lunch to celebrate their mutual birthdays. She surprised her by inviting several other prominent women who also were born under the sign of Scorpio.

They were joined by Mrs. Hilmar Koefed, Mrs. Michel Levy, Grace Ruth Southwick and Anna Mc Caughey at Santa Barbara's landmark El Paseo Restaurant. The lively group enjoyed a convivial celebration, including the round of drinks sent to their table by local gentlemen who were dining nearby. By the end of the gathering, Pearl floated the notion of the Scorpio Club. Her guests thought it was an intriguing idea.



Image by rawpixel.com

Continued on page 3

Don't forget to LIKE us on Facebook. 
www.facebook.com/PearlChaseSociety

Continued from page 2

Pearl was already very busy with her work through the California Conservation Council, the Garden Club, Plans and Planting and many other organizations. She also planned and hosted the annual Christmas gathering at the Recreation Center. The last thing she needed was to establish another organization that demanded her time and attention. So the Scorpio Club was deliberately simplified, with just a single meeting of the year, a gathering of women leaders in the community with limited membership, since the inviolate rule was that they all had to be under the same sign.

Still, the group expanded yearly. By 1944, it had grown to more than a dozen members. The club had a motto: "Work and Serve," a purpose: "To Discuss Why We Are the Way We Are," and several rules. The rules required designated members to send and telephone reminders; make arrangements for the luncheon; secure decorations and pay for the birthday cake. Additionally, each member was required to pay for their own lunch when it was held in a restaurant or club, bring a small, wrapped gift and a birthday card to participate in the anonymous exchange with other members.

The Scorpio Club may have started out as a bit of a lark, but with Pearl in charge, it soon became more formalized as an organization, complete with officers, a membership roster, an agenda, and high expectations for the members' enthusiastic participation.

Since it was known as "the one and only meeting of the year," each one followed a familiar format. Long-term members were encouraged to sit with new ones so that everyone would get to know each other. Pearl began the annual event with the ritual retelling of the history of the group. One member described the story as important as the holiday recitation of "The Night Before Christmas."

Next on the agenda was a time when members had the opportunity to talk about the trips they had taken in the past year and share the photos they had taken, from the nearby Channel Islands to the Canary Islands, from Mexico to Madagascar.

After that, Pearl would quiz everyone assembled about their work in civic activities and organizations. As one member described it, "We would all be seated and had to tell what we had contributed to the community that year, what we were doing."

Following the convivial gift and card exchange and dessert of cake and ice cream, Pearl would wrap up the

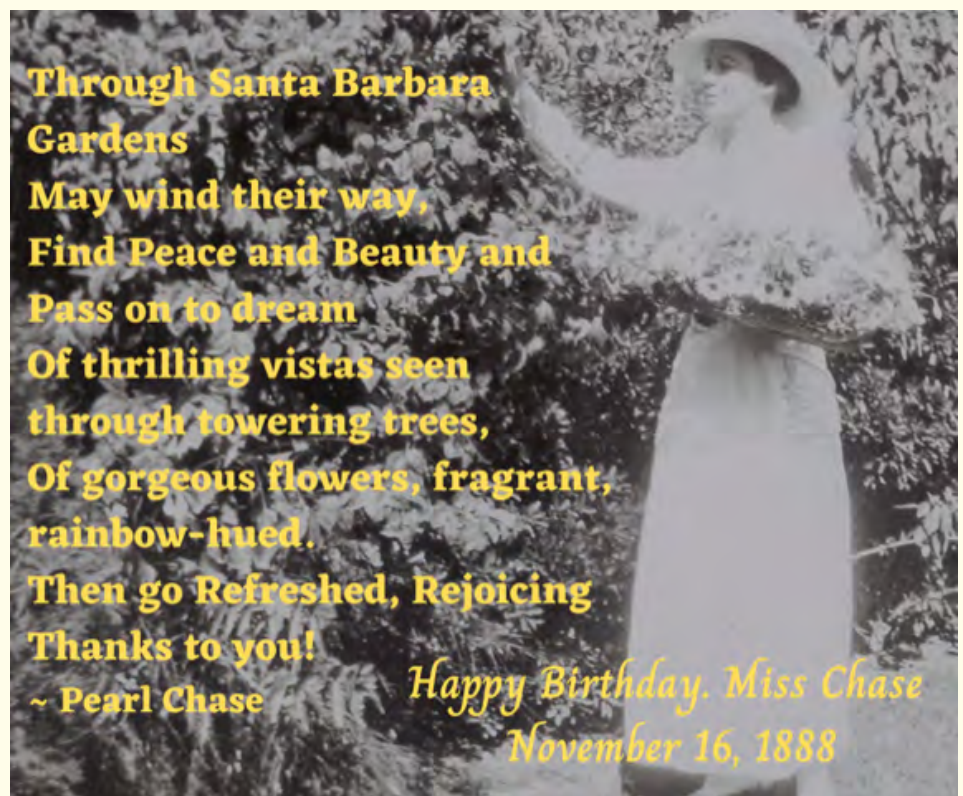
meeting by distributing a selection of inspirational quotes, and always, the wish for "A Happy Scorpio Year."

Beverley Jackson, the longtime society columnist for the *Santa Barbara News-Press*, was a member of the Scorpio Club. Lucky for her, she was born on November 20, barely making the cut. When she assumed the Presidency of the club in 1973, Pearl sent her a directive: "We should be diligently looking for Scorpion leaders in the major organizations that are continuing support of major community affairs, culture, education, athletics, etc."

Pearl called Beverley "the Party Lady and good friend." Shortly before her death in 1979, Pearl exacted a promise from her, "Please promise me you'll keep the Scorpio Club going," she pleaded. Beverley agreed. She hosted annual meetings at a variety of locations including private homes, the Coral Casino where she was a lifetime member, and the Santa Barbara Yacht Club. She confessed that the members sometimes chose to sip pink champagne instead of the hot tea that was Pearl's preference.

In an article she wrote for *Santa Barbara Magazine*, Beverley recalled one meeting that gave her chills: "As the club motto was being read, the front door blew open. It was a lovely calm day. There was no one at the door. I still get shivers remembering that, but I definitely believe that if Pearl wanted to remind us she was watching, she'd find her way back to a Scorpio meeting."

~ excerpted from the upcoming biography of Pearl Chase, "A String of Pearls: Miss Chase of Santa Barbara."



State Street Master Plan Update

By Steve Dowty

On October 14, 2022 the Santa Barbara Planning Commission and the Historic Landmarks Commission held the first of three joint meetings to discuss the master plan for State Street.

There will be nine future public meetings to discuss the master plan (in addition to the three joint meetings). Both commissioners and planners emphasized the imperative for public engagement in the process of planning State Street.

The master plan area is State St. from the 101 freeway to Sola Street and from Anacapa to Chapala.

The planners said that the master plan will acknowledge and coordinate the overlap of current city projects including the De La Guerra Plaza Revitalization, the library plaza, the 101 underpass enhancements and the farmers market re-location.

There is a broad scope for envisioning the State Street master plan. The planning team has set out to include; streetscape, historic resources, public art, public amenities, downtown housing, homeless engagement, equity and accessibility, stormwater management, utilities, mobility plan, sustainability, view corridors and economic development.

There will be a pedestrian focus to the plan. A pedestrianized State St. has been in discussion since the

1960s. In May 2020 State Street was closed to vehicles with the economic recovery ordinance (because of the COVID-19 epidemic), which expires in 2023. Hence, there is a need to design and implement this plan by that deadline.

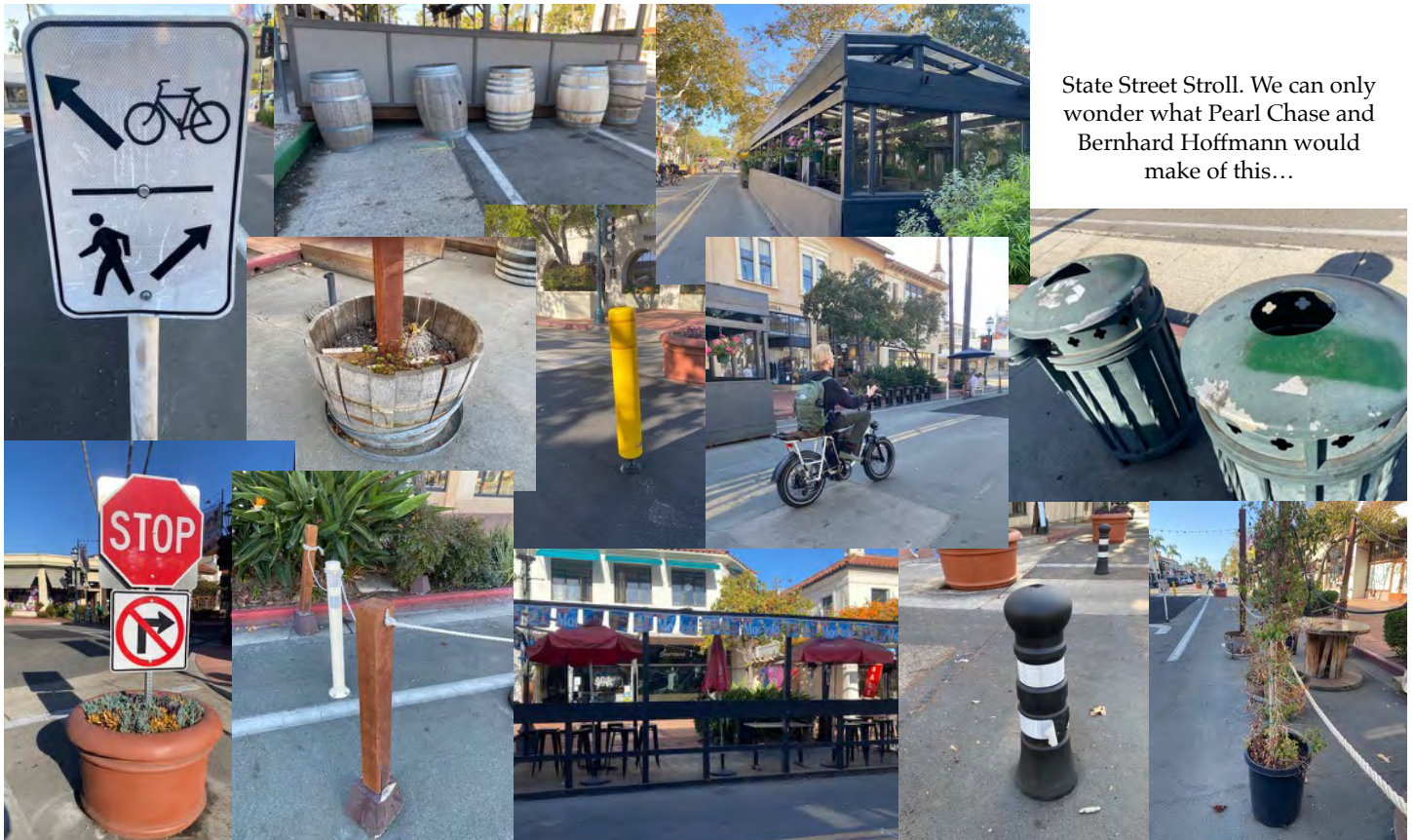
The process will involve; community engagement, an existing conditions analysis, urban design framework and conceptual design, and an implementation plan.

The planners emphasized the need for flexibility in the uses on State Street, stating that there is a much different State Street in the morning than there is at night. Also, a need for a design-for-locals, because if it is appreciated by locals then the tourists will come. Additionally, a need to recapture and reestablish an identity for State Street and the need to recognize the historic fabric.

Much of the public comment at the meeting revolved around one and two-wheeled vehicle traffic management. Bikes, skaters, particularly E-bikes and pedestrians are not compatible in State Street’s current configuration.

The next public meetings and community workshops will be held on-site, in a vacant storefront at 1230 State Street, on November 3rd and 4th.

<https://statestreet.santabarbaraca.gov/#about>



State Street Stroll. We can only wonder what Pearl Chase and Bernhard Hoffmann would make of this...