

THE CAPITAL

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

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MARCH MEETINGS OF INTEREST

PEARL CHASE SOCIETY

Next Board of Directors meeting: March 6, 2024 at the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society, 316 Castillo Street, 3:30 p.m.

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

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. [HERE](#). March 4, 11, 18

Planning Commission

First, second and third Thursdays of the month at 1 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall. [HERE](#). March 6, 13, 20

Historic Landmarks Commission

Every other Wednesday at 1:30 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. [HERE](#). March 12, 26

Architectural Board of Review

Mondays at 3 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. [HERE](#). March 3, 17

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

County Board of Supervisor Meetings and Planning Commission meetings are broadcast live on CSBTIV20. 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. March 5 (SB), 11 (SM), 18 (SB)

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. March 5 (SB), 12 (SM), 26 (SB)

County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

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

News and Notes

By Cheri Rae

As springtime approaches, we're pleased to announce the resumption of our popular Kellam de Forest Speaker Series. Join us on Friday, April 4 at 6 p.m. at the Alhecama Theatre for a presentation by Dennis Whelan, distinguished member of the Architectural Board of Review, and Board Member of the Pearl Chase Society. He will be speaking on the important and very timely topic, **Historic Preservation in the 21st Century: Why Do Old Places Matter?** Call (805) 961-3938 for reservations; the event is free of charge.

Highly prized Batchelder tiles were created by Los Angeles-based Arts-and-Crafts artist Ernest Batchelder, and they became sought-after for Craftsman homes built throughout Southern California, including Santa Barbara. (See page 2-3)

In Santa Barbara, the name of George Batchelder is known locally as the developer of the Riviera, philanthropist who donated the land for the Santa Barbara Bowl, and a visionary who advocated for the Andalusian design of the Courthouse.



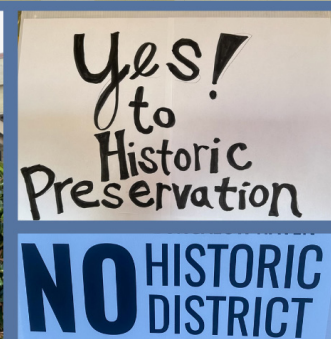
Since it's an unusual name and the two contemporaries were involved in housing, the question naturally arises if Ernest (1875-1957) and George (1861-1936) were related. We have a possible answer thanks to Leslie Ervin, the granddaughter of local librarian, historian and author Stella Haverland Rouse, who wrote weekly columns of historic interest for the *Santa Barbara News-Press* and served as the editor of *Noticias* for the Santa Barbara Historical Museum for many years.

Ervin—who lives in a Batchelder-built home on the Riviera, that features what appear to be Batchelder tiles on in the fireplace—has done her genealogy homework. She recently discovered she is distantly related to both Ernest and George Batchelder so there is some familial association between the two men, both who left their mark on the art and architecture of this area. And who were both born in New Hampshire. As she noted, "I do not have direct knowledge or evidence that they knew each other, but circumstantial evidence suggests they probably did, and presumably knew they were related.... At least they seemed to travel in the same social circles. That's something!"

Historians and preservationists are always up for the challenge of exploring, researching, and solving these little mysteries that provide small clues to our connections, our communities, our past, present and future.

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

Historic Preservation in the 21st Century: Why Do Old Places Matter?
Presented by **Dennis Whelan**
Member of Architectural Board of Review
Friday, April 4th, 6 p.m. at the Alhecama Theatre
CALL (805) 961-3938 for reservations for this free event

Developer George Batchelder

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Please direct inquiries
and comments to:

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NewsletterCheri Rae, *editor*Lisa DeSpain, *graphics*

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A Tile Tale*By Cheri Rae*

When my husband and I began our first house-hunting experience, we attended an open house at a charming little bungalow on a tiny street on the Lower Riviera. Little and tiny were the operative words; it was just too small to meet our needs. The Realtor kept trying to convince us that its historic features outweighed our objections. "Look at the fireplace," she insisted, "It has a Batchelder tile! Wouldn't you like to live in a house with a Batchelder tile?"

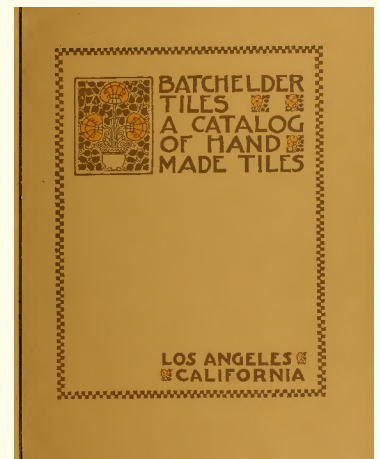
*Tile artist Ernest Batchelder*

We agreed the unique green bas-relief tile surrounded by darker earth tones was lovely, but at the time, we had no idea of what she was talking about. We just thought it was strange to promote the sale of a whole house based on less than a square foot of tile with an odd name.

In 1993, we purchased a more fitting bungalow, a few blocks away and have lived there ever since. Built in 1912, it has neither a fireplace nor a Batchelder tile, but we love it anyway. Owning a historic house in a historic neighborhood conveys certain responsibilities to preserve, protect and optimize its care for the next generation. I've been lucky enough to live amongst a caring group of neighbors who, since 2002, have worked together to become stewards of a neighborhood we named Bungalow Haven. We have gained and shared knowledge about myriad aspects of the Arts-and-Crafts era when our homes were built—including Batchelder tiles.

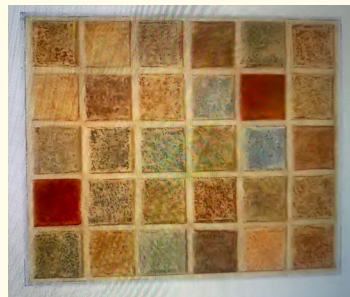
Los Angeles-based artist Ernest Batchelder began his craft in 1910, benefitting from a construction boom in the Arroyo Seco area. His tiles have been prized ever since for their subtle colors and their striking nature motifs, geometric shapes influenced by Medieval, Mayan and Byzantine themes. A description from his a widely distributed catalog of his distinctive tiles:

Our material is appropriate for interior and exterior enrichment. It is used for mantels, pavements, fountains, counters, storefronts, in fact, it is suitable for any place where a fired clay product may be properly specified. Our product is hand wrought by processes developed in our own factory. The body is an encaustic, non-vitreous material; the color is a mineral slip fired into the surface at high temperatures in such way that it becomes an integral part of the body, presenting a surface texture free from gloss and with the mottled surface characteristic of Batchelder Tiles. It will be found that there are slight variations of shape and size.



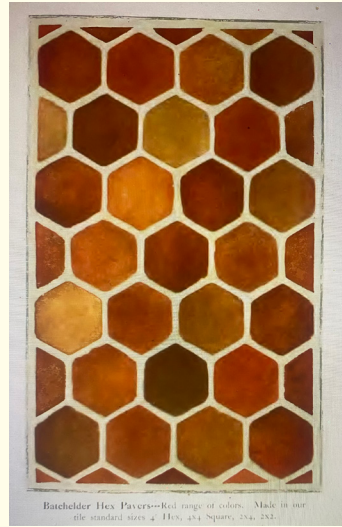
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Colorful images from the Batchelder Tile Catalog, circa 1923.

Right: Three intricate, nature-themed Batchelder tiles featured on the fireplace in the library at the Music Academy of the West.



Batchelder Hex Pavers—Red range of colors. Made in our tile standard sizes 4" Hex, 4 1/4" Square, 2 3/4" x 2 3/4".



Batchelder Hex Pavers—Green range of colors. Made in our tile standard sizes 4" Hex, 4 1/4" Square, 2 3/4" x 2 3/4".



Turns out Santa Barbara has a fair share of homes, not just modest bungalows, that include Batchelder tiles. Real estate listings frequently list them as a desirable characteristic of a property. The grand Granholm Estate in Montecito, built for philanthropist David Gray in 1918, features floors fashioned from Batchelder tiles; the fireplace surround in the library at the Music Academy of the West is comprised of a collection of striking Batchelder tiles.

Early in his career as a tile maker, Batchelder lived in Altadena and fired the tiles in his backyard kiln; his distinctive creations were installed in the fireplaces numerous nearby homes built a century ago.

When the wildfires recently ripped through Eaton Canyon in Altadena, far too many residents were left with little to nothing, their possessions lost, reduced to heartbreak and ash. But

some, whose modest homes and historic Craftsman

bungalows burned to the ground, began an immediate effort to salvage the treasured tiles that survived the firestorm, even as they were still reeling from the magnitude of their losses.

As good neighbors do, they banded together and quickly organized their efforts to maximize their effectiveness. Sifting through the ruins and carefully removing the prized tiles from chimneys still standing gave meaning to the moment for these survivors of what was once unthinkable. These century-old bits of art hold memories and more: they have become priceless

remnants of the lives they once lived, hopeful reminders of the lives that they will rebuild.

Fashioned from earth and intentionally fired in their creation, the tiles withstood a second, unintentional firing that did not break them. And they will forever be a part of home in a very special community.

For more information about the Altadena's Save the Tiles effort: [HERE](#)

For more information and a short video on the salvage work: [HERE](#)

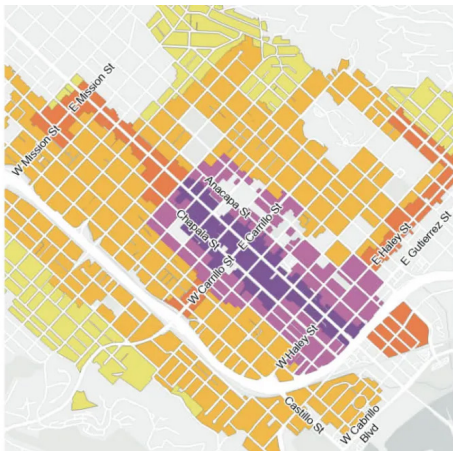
PRESERVATION WATCH

City Council meetings

January 28

The Council received a progress report on the Short-Term Action Plan for the State Street Master Plan project area that details pilot projects and proposals intended to improve the Promenade. The report details pilot projects that implement design concepts of the State Street Master Plan, including:

- Begin the elimination of traffic barriers on State Street; concrete barriers were removed from the 400 block of State Street and the plastic water barriers were wrapped with artwork to improve their appearance.
- Reduction or elimination of non-tree landscaping on one block to allow for additional outdoor dining.
- Relocating outdoor dining on the 500 block from the street onto the walkways and using pre-fabricated “pedlets” which are designed to safely divert foot traffic around the sidewalk space in front of a restaurant or business.
- Removal of obsolete newspaper racks.
- Standardize the appearance of dining furniture.
- Add greenery.



February 4

Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS);

The purpose of the ODDS is to provide clear, objective, and measurable standards to make the requirements for housing projects more predictable and easier to interpret for everyone—decision-makers, staff, applicants, and the public.

For decades, the City has used discretionary design review in new development to ensure protection and preservation of the community’s natural beauty and charm. To address California’s housing crisis, the state has increasingly passed legislation that prohibits discretionary review and approval per subjective guidelines for certain multi-unit housing projects.

This transition from using *subjective* design guidelines to *objective* design standards (for specific types of housing projects) is a significant shift for the City, but it provides an opportunity to advance housing production while maintaining the City’s design priorities.

The City benefits from ODDS by maintaining a standard of review for projects using objective standards. Applicants benefit with predictable design expectations, fewer design review hearings, and limits on appeals. The community benefits with new housing projects that preserve local character.

Santa Barbara is somewhat unique in that the ODDS regulate architectural style to further refine intended building form and physical character, comply with existing style regulations, and produce new buildings that harmonize with the existing character. Three style groups are allowed with two sub-styles each: 1) Mediterranean, 2) Craftsman, and 3) Contemporary. The ODDS Architectural Styles Map further refines this concept by regulating which areas of the City allow Mediterranean only; Mediterranean and Craftsman; or Mediterranean, Craftsman, and Contemporary.

For more information about ODD: [HERE](#)

Planning Commission, January 16

Macy’s building, 3805 State Street

Proposal to demolish the existing multi-story structure, Macy’s, and associated parking, and construct a 680-unit mixed-use housing project on the site. It is not a designated historic site nor within an historic district. Architectural Historian Nicole Hernandez, stated that the California Office for Historic Preservation accepted the conclusion that the property is not historically significant. She reviewed the analysis and agrees with its conclusion that the property does not meet the criteria to qualify as an historic resource. Note: Macy’s plans to vacate the property in 2028.

For an in-depth report about the project: [HERE](#)

