

# THE CAPITAL

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

Vol. 29, No. 5 • [www.PearlChaseSociety.org](http://www.PearlChaseSociety.org) • May 2026

## MAY MEETINGS OF INTEREST

### PEARL CHASE SOCIETY

Next Board of Directors meeting at the Carriage and Western Art Museum of Santa Barbara, 129 Castillo Street, May 7 at 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](#). May 5, 12, 19

#### Planning Commission

First, second and third Thursdays of the month at 1 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall. [HERE](#). May 21

#### Historic Landmarks Commission

Every other Wednesday at 1:30 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. [HERE](#). May 6, 20

#### Architectural Board of Review

Alternate Mondays at 3 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. [HERE](#). May 11, 16

### 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 a.m. The first and third meetings are held in Santa Barbara in the Board of Supervisors Hearing Room, 105 East Anapamu Street, 4th Floor. The second meeting is (typically) held in Santa Maria at 511 East Lakeside Parkway. May 5 (SB), 12 (SM), 19 (SB)

#### County Planning Commission

Three Wednesdays of the month at 9 a.m. 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. May 6 (SB), 13 (SM), 27 (SB)

#### County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

Second Monday of the month at 10 a.m. at 123 East Anapamu Street, Room 17 (unless specified otherwise). May 11

## News and Notes

**NOTE:** This is the letter that Christine Neuhauser wrote (as a private citizen) to express her thoughts about the future of State Street. The City Council meeting to discuss the State Street Master Plan and given final direction to the staff took place on Tuesday, April 28. View it for yourself [HERE](#). It's not too late to send in your comments as directed on the City's website.

Dear Members of City Council and City Staff,  
Away with the State St promenade /bikepath/ neighborhood /playground. Release State Street from the confines and obstruction made by tunnel-visioned activists. Let State Street return to its former status, before the covid closures. And to be used for its original, traditional purposes, as a transportation corridor, and open to Santa Barbara's annual celebrations, July 4th, Fiesta, Solstice and Christmas parades. Untie the hands of the Historic Landmarks Commission and reinstate their function to steer preservation and design. This is the El Pueblo Viejo!

Why would a city take such a classic beautiful main street and turn it into a carnival act, in a 3-ring circus? Who is profiting from this 6-year costly merry-go-round? Paint this, move this planter, sidewalk on, sidewalk off. Endless consultants hired then fired, if they don't follow your narrative. (The consultation group MIG said this experiment will end in failure. They were dismissed for a cost of \$780,000. Oh, and the time wasted.)

The idea of a meandering walkway /experience is laughable, except for the taxpayers and townspeople, for them, it's revolting. Trees and vegetation down the middle of State Street. This isn't Disneyland, just more confusion. Besides which the trees and vegetation in the roadway obstructs the iconic view of the ocean from State Street and Sola to the beach. The ocean which in the first 40 pages of the Master plan pays homage to the importance the ocean holds for the Chumash. But alas, in the effort for flat, fun and flexibility, we can't see the water anymore, except when we have a good rain, we will have it at our ankles.

Nationwide, none of the very few pedestrian promenades have proven financially successful. This mile long playground is too long, too costly, and too stupid. And everyone knows it or else "they" would have pulled the trigger. As Dave Davis originally asked, "Where is the poetry, and how do we revive commerce?"

Presently, downtown State Street presents itself as a glorified racing bike path, empty, except for e-bikers whizzing by vacant storefronts, and strolling tourists. No window shopping to be had, inspiration that creates desire is absent. Their solution—widen the sidewalks to 30 ft, so full circle, pedestrians back on the sidewalk safely. After six years that's what 15 million to date got us, and the future new and improved with the best-consultant-ever is over \$80 million plus with an undetermined end date. Who is benefiting from this? Where is the housing on top of retail?

Today, I urge you to incorporate Cass Ensberg's idea to open State Street and share the road as decent people do.

Wow! It is simple arithmetic. On the other hand, the City Council will not balance the budget, no matter how often you tax us and raise our fees.

Respectfully,  
Christine Neuhauser

**Want to get involved, or have submissions for  
The Capital? Email us at [PCS@pearlchasesociety.org](mailto:PCS@pearlchasesociety.org).**

## PEARL CHASE SOCIETY

### Board of Directors

#### President

Christine Neuhauser

#### Vice President

Emma Brinkman

#### Secretary

Dennis Whelan

#### Treasurer

Nate Cultice

#### Historian

Patti Ottoboni

### Board Members

Barbara Boyd

Steve Dowty

Tina Foss

Maureen Masson

Brian Miller

Robert Ooley

Kitty Peri

Dylan Peterson

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.

## The Glorious Gardens of Santa Barbara and Montecito—on Full Display 100 Years Ago

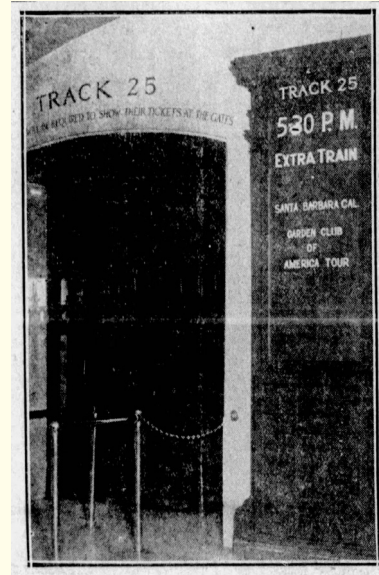
By Cheri Rae

In the spring of 1926, the Garden Club of America held its annual meeting in Santa Barbara. Affluent garden-lovers from the East Coast boarded a special train at Grand Central Station, for the cross-country trip. Many of the delegates to the meeting stayed at the luxurious El Mirasol hotel for the four-day event—and they visited spectacular gardens of the great estates of Santa Barbara and Montecito.

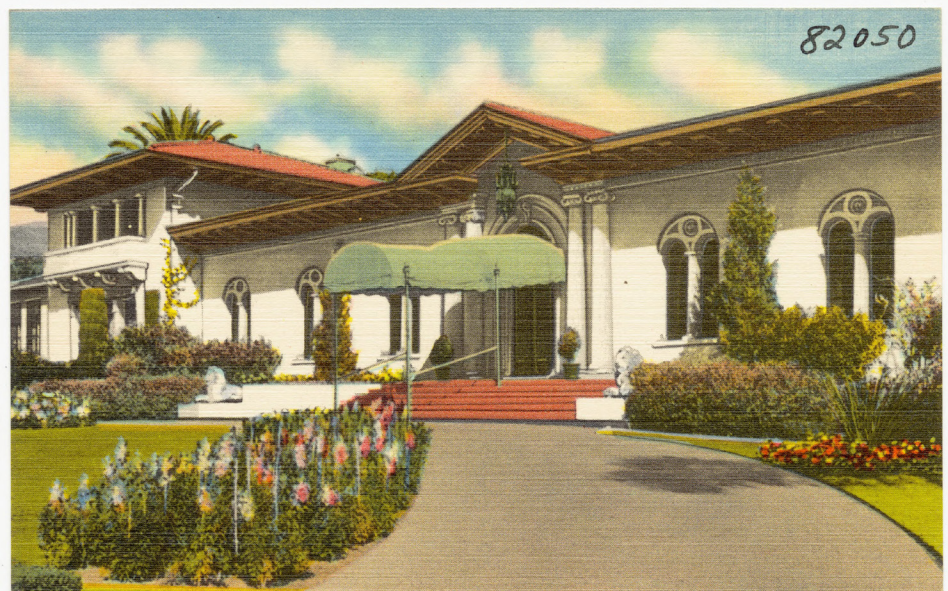
An editorial in *The Morning Press* welcomed the Garden Club delegates to the convention: *While our gardens may be said to be “at their best” they are just as beautiful most of the year and as a matter of fact, we seldom have “a best” time in Santa Barbara for showing beauty.*

It continued, *We love Santa Barbara because to us of Santa Barbara it is the most loveable city in America. Founded in the long ago by the self-sacrificing Franciscan Friars, the growth of Santa Barbara has been gradual, but the city has been builded in love by those who came here and settled because they found it a delightful place to live. There has been harmony, generally, and always a united loyalty of the place that we call our home.*

The editorial concluded, *Our welcome to you as visitors to our homes is all the more sincere because of this*



*Extra train left from Grand Central Station in New York carrying Garden Club of America delegates to their annual springtime convention. In 1926 it was held in Santa Barbara. Bernhard Hoffmann took the photograph and wired it to The Morning Press. His winter home in Santa Barbara, Casa Santa Cruz, was the setting for several luncheons and teas during the four-day event.*



*Convention delegates were treated to classic Santa Barbara elegance during their stay at the graceful El Mirasol hotel.*

LIKE us on Facebook. 

[www.facebook.com/PearlChaseSociety](http://www.facebook.com/PearlChaseSociety)

*love we have for our city, because we feel that we have so much to be appreciative of and thankful for that we can and should share it with those who come amongst us. We of Santa Barbara hope you like your visit. Come again!*



*Gardens visited included (L) Granada House; (C) Glendessary; (R) El Cerritto.*

Following the private tours for the Garden Club, the public was—after a time when they were not allowed—once again invited to participate in tours. But they were cautioned in an article in *The Morning Press* to mind their manners:

*The pleasant custom of opening beautiful gardens to the public has been inaugurated again. There was a time once when most of the lovely estates were open for inspection, but the public abused the privilege, picked the flowers and trampled them. Now a system of garden tours have been instituted in connection with the Better Homes campaign. The gardens will be open only on certain days and in connection with a garden tour planned by a committee representing the Plans and Plans of Community Arts association, Better Homes committee, Garden club of Santa Barbara and Montecito and the Santa Barbara Horticultural society.*

*Doubtless the tours, arranged twice a week, will prove of untold educational value. Perhaps the majority of garden lovers and home owners who go on the tours can not hope to have large estates, but these estates are made up of small gardens, and these small gardens may furnish inspiration for their own. There is always something to be learned in color and arrangement to be applied on a smaller scale.*



*Among the grand Montecito states they visited were (L) Arcady and (R) Las Tejas. All historic photos this page courtesy the Library of Congress.*

## The Merry Month of May

(Source: May 1, 1926, *The Morning Press*)

### So This Is May!

This is the month of May

More specifically this is the first of May—May Day.

May Day, in itself never reached the height of its glory until the Reds

began using it as a holiday for bomb throwing tournaments.

And President Wilson began whipping congress into line with his “May I note.”

It has enjoyed general success for years.

But be that as it May.

This is the month of May.

So named because there are more things you may do this month than in any other.

You May walk.

May have to while the old car is being relieved of a bronchial condition, chronic over the winter.

May have to spend Saturday afternoons massaging the lawn.

May find your lawn mower. Or may find you kept the neighbor’s all winter.

May have to eat your picnic dinner in the car when you go for a ramble, for it rains often even in May.

May get a raise.

May not.

May get 14 months to pay for what the missus buys “to fix up the living room so it’s at least livable.”

May not.

May find last year’s summer suit in good condition.

May find it has been food for the moths.

May be a prospective bride.

May be just the groom.

May get a kick out of seeing ‘em getting ready.

May sympathize with one or the other—or both.

May find yourself sour on the world.

May not.

Better not.

For May is the month of flowers, of sunshine.

Nature is at her best.

So put on a bold front, if you can’t put on a new one.

This is May.

*“May’s blossoms are a reminder to  
bloom where we are planted.”*

*~ Ralph Waldo Emerson*

