



# La Campana

Winter 2021 ✦ Vol. 47, No. 1



# La Campana

## WINTER 2021, VOL. 47, NO. 1

*La Campana* is a publication of the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Members of SBTHP receive *La Campana* as a benefit of membership.

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### ON THE COVER

This small, colorful Imari plate, a type of Japanese export porcelain, is one of many artifacts in SBTHP's Nihonmachi (Japantown) collection. *Photo by Anne Petersen.*

### ON THE BACK COVER

In May 2020, SBTHP joined several other cultural institutions and took part in "Light It Blue," installing nighttime displays of blue light in solidarity with the public's gratitude for the tireless efforts of essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Photo by Nick Clark.*

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### OUR MISSION

The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation stewards the past and present of the Presidio Neighborhood and inspires preservation advocacy throughout the County in order to create a more vibrant community.

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*El Presidio de Santa Bárbara SHP • Casa de la Guerra  
Santa Inés Mission Mills • Jimmy's Oriental Gardens*

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### MUSEUM HOURS

AT TIME OF PRINTING, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATEST STATE AND COUNTY GUIDELINES, EL PRESIDIO DE SANTA BÁRBARA STATE HISTORIC PARK AND CASA DE LA GUERRA ARE CURRENTLY

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### STORY IDEAS

Do you have a story idea or are you interested in writing an article for *La Campana*? Don't hesitate to let us know. For content guidelines or more information contact Kevin McGarry, kevin@sbthp.org.



## In This Issue

### From the Executive Director

by Anne Petersen, Ph.D. .... 2

Programs Update ..... 3

### Material Markets of the World: Early finds in the Nihonmachi Archaeology Collection

by Koji Lau-Ozawa ..... 5

Progress in Preservation: Jimmy's Exhibit ..... 15

### Presidio Neighborhood Spotlight: Divinitree Yoga Studio

..... 16

### In Memoriam: Judy Pearce

by Kevin McGarry, Associate Director for Public Engagement... 17

### Remembering Jack Romero

by Jim Elwell Martinez ..... 19

### A Tribute to George W. "Bud" Decker, Jr.

by Mary Louise Days ..... 21

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## From the Executive Director

Welcome, readers, to a new year, and a slightly reimagined *La Campana*. We hope this format will provide you with more of the content you enjoy, and a streamlined presentation of our impact on historic preservation. It has been a difficult last year with many unforeseen changes and challenges. The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation is committed to using this period of disruption and closure to reflect on our operation and emerge stronger, more strategic, and with a renewed focus on service and outcomes.

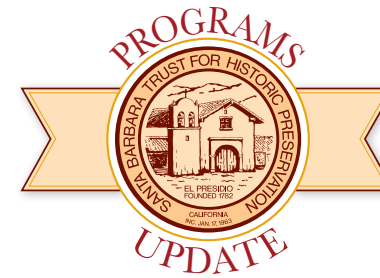


Inside this issue you will find a report on our recent programs, including the exceedingly popular online lecture series and our seventh-grade school program, *Where We Are From*. We also bring you a dispatch from Stanford graduate student Koji Lau-Ozawa, who is making great strides in his research about the archaeology of Japanese incarceration camps during World War II. His analysis includes comparison between the material culture of camp sites and pre-war Japanese communities in the United States. We are pleased that the collections related to Santa Barbara's Nihonmachi at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park inform his work. Also, in this issue we are introducing new regular features to keep you up to date on our preservation and interpretive projects, as well as new developments in the Presidio Neighborhood.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *La Campana*. Please also keep an eye out on our blog and social media accounts, where we provide frequent updates about new projects and programs. I will offer a few sneak peeks here to kick off the new year. We are working on improvements to the visitor experience at El Presidio SHP and look forward to reopening the park when it is safe to do so. We also continue to advance our strategic goals and have begun implementation of our new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan. This plan, which overlaps with and enriches our current strategic plan, charts a path forward to ensure that our nonprofit serves the broadest possible audience, and reflects the needs and interests of our stakeholders. One of our first projects will be to create a fully bilingual version of our website, with content offered in English and Spanish. Keeping you informed is a top priority, and we will share more with you as we launch new initiatives. We wish you continued health and wellness, and a positive 2021 for all of us.

*Anne Petersen*

Anne Petersen  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## “Where We Are From” Junior High School Program Goes Virtual

In June 2020, SBTHP received a CARES Cultural Organizations grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to fund the second iteration of our new, annual junior high school program, *Where We Are From* (WWAF). In partnership with Santa Barbara Junior High School, UC Santa Barbara Department of History and California State Parks, SBTHP successfully facilitated a week-long, interactive virtual field trip program focused around the resources of El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park. Held over Zoom during the first week of October 2020, WWAF reached approximately 350 seventh-grade students and their families. WWAF 2020 involved hands-on, multimedia, and digital learning activities utilizing the Park's historical resources and digital learning platforms. To learn more visit: [sbthp.org/wherewearefrom](http://sbthp.org/wherewearefrom).

After learning about two historical case studies including the Anza Expedition, WWAF students answer a Zoom poll about what it would feel like to leave a home with few belongings and migrate to an unknown, far-away place.





## SBTHP Prioritizes Online Programming During Pandemic

In order to remain relevant and resonant to our stakeholders and audiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, SBTHP staff worked diligently to create more free online experiences, including

instructional videos and virtual tours for our Virtual Learning Center ([sbthp.org/learningcenter](http://sbthp.org/learningcenter)) and to offer free online lectures and dialogues through Zoom. These free online programs included a three-part November Speaker Series entitled Advances in the Preservation & Archaeology of Asian American Places, a lecture about José de la Guerra's international trade in the early 1800s by Dr. Marie Duggan, and an event co-sponsored by the UCSB History Associates featuring former Santa Barbara mayor Sheila Lodge, who presented the research behind her new book, *Santa Barbara: An Uncommonplace American Town*.

SBTHP posts recordings of these free programs online.

To view past lectures, please visit [sbthp.org/lectures](http://sbthp.org/lectures) and to view upcoming online events, visit [sbthp.org/calendar](http://sbthp.org/calendar).



As part of our November Speaker Series, Lisa Masengale, Curator of Historic Structures for the City of Riverside, discussed the importance of the Harada House to Japanese American history and their ongoing work to conserve, restore, and stabilize the building. The house was the focus of a critical application of the California Alien Land Law of 1913, which prevented foreigners who were ineligible for citizenship from owning property. Photo by Lisa Masengale.



## Material Markets of the World: Early finds in the Nihonmachi Archaeology Collection at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park

by Koji Lau-Ozawa

*A doctoral candidate in Stanford University's Anthropology Department, Koji Lau-Ozawa's research focuses on the sites of Japanese incarceration during World War II. His close analysis of the remaining material evidence at these sites has produced remarkable examples of cultural preservation and persistence, along with efforts at adaptability and survival through harsh conditions and in light of an uncertain future. Mr. Lau-Ozawa has spent many hours with SBTHP's collection of material remains from Santa Barbara's Nihonmachi, a community of Japanese Americans who inhabited part of the Presidio Neighborhood in the early 20th Century, many of whom were incarcerated at Gila River Relocation Center in Pinal County, Arizona in 1942-1945.*

### Introduction

The neighborhood of *Nihonmachi* was a small enclave of Japanese Americans standing near the center of Santa Barbara's commercial district. The prime days of the neighborhood were between the mid-1920s and the onset of WWII. Residents and merchants worked around town, often as gardeners and domestic laborers, with farmers from the surrounding areas coming into *Nihonmachi* to participate in social organizations, attend religious services or purchase goods. Though the neighborhood may have seemed fairly unremarkable to the passerby, it stood connected to a global network of goods and cultures, connected to the wider world which was undergoing constant changes during the first half of the twentieth century. At a gathering in the summer of 2019, former residents of the neighborhood remembered walking through Japanese stores, peering across the street at Chinese merchants and around the corner to a Filipino pool-hall, while the aromas of sweet breads from a nearby Italian bakery floated through the air.

While the history of the *Nihonmachi* or *Nihonjinmachi*, Japantown and Japanese-town respectively, of major urban areas like Seattle, Los Angeles and San Francisco are better known, ones in smaller towns have been less studied.<sup>1</sup> Looking to Santa Barbara's *Nihonmachi* from a variety of mediums, through archival, oral historical, and archaeological data, stands to broaden understandings of both pre-WWII Japanese American communities and Santa Barbara's own history. How did people interact across lines of race and class in the small coastal community? While the circumstances of the global pandemic have slowed and inhibited many research activities, this article provides a first look at some of the archaeological investigations under way at *Nihonmachi*. In particular, it focuses on a handful of artifacts and the linkages to world markets that they represent. While ethnic neighborhoods are defined by *de facto* or *de jure* segregation, separated and confined from the wider community, the artifacts of *Nihonmachi* speak to material connections that transcended redlined restrictions and connected its residents to the world.

### Japanese Diaspora

With the onset of reforms which took place during the Meiji era (1868-1912) of Japan, people began moving away from the archipelago in the early 1870s, traveling throughout the Pacific. This included migration to newly acquired colonial holdings like Hokkaido and eventually Okinawa, as well as to foreign destinations such as the Kingdom of Hawai'i and the United States. As the Japanese Empire expanded with the annexations of Taiwan, Korea, much of Micronesia, and eventually the Manchuria region, migrants settled in all territories of the colonial empire, and increased in movement to North America and South America.<sup>2</sup> Further, many migrants did not settle in one location, but traveled across multiple destinations, moving and trading across national boundaries. Such movement created a diaspora, a dispersal of people from one homeland to multiple destinations, that maintained connections through complex transnational networks.<sup>3</sup>

### Japanese America: Santa Barbara County

In the continental United States, the West Coast, and California in particular, was the prime destination for Japanese migrants. Japanese diasporic communities formed in major urban centers like San Francisco and Los Angeles, smaller towns like Fresno and Santa Barbara, and numerous farming communities throughout the state. In the 1880s and 1890s, many came as *dekasegi* migrants, planning to work in California and return to Japan. These migrants worked in various labor occupations, though eventually this trend changed, with

more Japanese migrants turning to sedentary agricultural occupations, purchasing and leasing farmland throughout the state.<sup>4</sup>

Japanese migrants in California, however, faced numerous prejudicial obstacles. Earlier Chinese diasporic communities faced intense racial discrimination and an eventual ban from migrating to the United States with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. These anti-Asian sentiments turned towards the Japanese, with exclusions from labor unions, segregation in schools, and Alien Land Laws targeting Japanese farmers. Despite these hurdles, Japanese Americans in the United States thrived, with *issei*, or first-generation Japanese migrants and *nisei*, second generation Japanese Americans born in the United States, building long-lasting community organizations and connections.

In Santa Barbara County, Japanese American communities grew in Santa Maria, Guadalupe, and Lompoc, as well as in the more urban Santa Barbara. Kent Haldan contends that the communities in the Santa Maria Valley grew to dominate the vegetable industry of the area, creating vertically stratified ethnic enclaves, while the Japanese community in Santa Barbara was subsumed into a much more racially segregated economy, mostly working in sectors such as gardening and domestic labor.<sup>5</sup>

The Japanese American population of Santa Barbara County was irrevocably changed with the onset of WWII. In the first months of 1942, President Roosevelt signed executive order 9066, creating an exclusion zone along the western coast of the United States, and paving the way for the mass removal and exclusion of all persons of Japanese ancestry. In Santa Barbara, Japanese Americans were largely removed to the Tulare fairgrounds, a temporary detention facility in eastern California, before confinement at the Gila River Incarceration Camp in southern Arizona. Most were not able to return to California until 1945. Having suffered immense property and financial loss, and often facing racial hostility, many Japanese American communities never recovered.

### Nihonmachi

*Nihonmachi*, as it is known today, sat near the heart of Santa Barbara's downtown, centered on the 100 block of East Canon Perdido Street between Anacapa and Santa Barbara Streets, and where today part of the historic El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park is situated. While the city of Santa Barbara's Japanese population wasn't as large or as concentrated as Santa Maria's or Guadalupe's, its heart was undeniably in *Nihonmachi*, which served as a residential and commercial center. The Japanese neighborhood stood across the street from the city's main Chinese enclave, which was pushed to the 100 block of East



A post-WWII photo of the barbershop and the Buddhist Church that were located on the 100 block of E. Canon Perdido St. in Santa Barbara's Nihonmachi. Photo courtesy of the Presidio Research Center.

Canon Perdido with redevelopments following the 1925 earthquake.<sup>6</sup> Not only did many of the city's Japanese residents live and work around *Nihonmachi*, but members of the surrounding farming community would travel there to attend service at one of the neighborhood's two religious centers, the Japanese Congregational Church and the Buddhist Church.<sup>7</sup> According to one record there were 630 people of Japanese ancestry living in Santa Barbara and its surrounding areas in 1940, with multiple cultural associations and businesses.<sup>8</sup>

The neighborhood boasted multiple boarding houses, grocery stores, regional associations, employment offices, and a barbershop. Though the block was small it was densely packed with people and organizations often sharing the same buildings as their homes. For instance, the 1940 directories for the Japanese newspapers *Rafu Shimpō* and *Kashu Mainichi* list the Asakura Hotel as the residence of at least 19 individuals in addition to the Japanese American Citizens League, a Chop Suey restaurant, and an attached grocery store. The Buddhist Church also shared its address with a Japanese School, the Buddhist *Fujinkai* (religious organization), the Young Men's and Women's Buddhist Association (YMWBA), and the *Kumamoto Kai-Gai* (Kumamoto prefecture overseas association). In those same directories, at least 51 individuals are listed as living on the 100 block of East Canon Perdido Street.<sup>9</sup>

As with the rest of Santa Barbara County, the mass removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans spelled the end of the *Nihonmachi* area. The Christian and Buddhist Churches served as hostels for returning Japanese Americans after their incarceration at Gila River, but soon after they mostly dispersed. Though many *Nihonmachi* residents and their descendants still live in the Santa Barbara area, the neighborhood itself was mostly destroyed in the subsequent years before the acquisition of the land for the restoration of the *El Presidio de Santa Bárbara*, starting in the 1960s.

### Archaeological Research

The first archaeological work related to *Nihonmachi* occurred from 1968-1974 with excavations uncovering portions of the historic *El Presidio de Santa Bárbara* also revealing artifacts and features related to the area's *Nihonmachi* period.<sup>10</sup> Other work at the site during this period, conducted by a local school on the historic Bonilla House, also yielded materials likely associated with the *Nihonmachi* period. These excavations are historically important, not only for the data they yielded, but as some of the first documented excavations of material related to a Japanese American community.<sup>11</sup> More intensive documentations did not occur until the early 2000s, with excavations revealing large concentrations of material related to the Japanese American community and culminating with many artifacts integrated into the exhibit "Nihonmachi Revisited." However, much of this material, as with the earlier finds from the 60s and 70s, has not yet been fully analyzed.

### Current Finds

In the summer of 2019, in collaboration with the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation and Michigan State University Professor Stacey Camp, and assisted by recent UCSB graduate Ashlynn Deupree, I began to re-catalog and analyze materials excavated previously in the *Nihonmachi* area. This effort has continued with a selection of materials related to a single trash deposit feature excavated in 2009, and brought back to Stanford University for more detailed analysis. Though efforts have been slowed by the COVID-19 pandemic, research has continued with early finds yielding encouraging results. For instance, six medicinal bottles have been identified in the trash deposit, listed in Table 1.

The assemblage of medicine bottles includes three American drug manufacturers, Imperial Cement, Upjohn, and the Hall & Ruckel company, which manufactured and sold a variety of medicines.<sup>12</sup> Also included in the assemblage is a medicine bottle from a local pharmacy, the Red Cross Drug Co., located at 828 State Street in Santa Barbara.

SAMPLE/ CAT.NO.	EMBOSSMENT	MEDICINAL USE	COMPANY LOCATION
2113-445	IMPERIAL CEMENT	Dental Cement	Unknown
2113-446	30/PHENOLAX/WAFERS/UPJOHN	Laxative	Kalamazoo, MI
2113-447	RED CROSS DRUG CO/828 STATE ST/SANTA BARBARA, CAL.	Unknown	Santa Barbara
2113-449	HALL & RUCKEL/NEW YORK	Unknown	New York, NY
2113-492	山崎帝國堂 (YAMAZAKI TEIKOKUDO)	Constipation	Kashiwa, Japan
2113-493	大學目藥 (DAIGAKU MEYAKU) 堂藥房 (PROBABLY: 参天堂藥房 SANTENDO YAKUBO)	Eye Drops	Osaka, Japan

**Table 1** Medicine Bottles Identified in Feature 2 Trash Deposit.

SAMPLE/ CAT.NO.	MARK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	FORM
2113-633	D&C/FRANCE	FRANCE	TEACUP
2113-634	D&C/FRANCE L. BERNARDAUD & CO/LIMOGES	FRANCE	SAUCER
2113-635	HAVILAND FRANCE/HAVILAND & CO NATHAN DORHMANN CO	FRANCE	SAUCER
2113-867	HOMER LAUGHLIN REPUBLIC/ 80N	OHIO, USA	DISH

**Table 2** European and American Manufactured Ceramic Makers Marks found in Feature 2 Trash Deposit.

Finally, two medicine bottles from this particular trash pit listed Japanese company names, Yamazaki Teikokudo and Santendo Yakubo. Both companies were founded during the Meiji era, and still exist today.<sup>13</sup>

The cataloging of ceramics is ongoing, but it is worth noting that there are, similar to the medicine bottles, an array of geographic networks represented. However, early analysis suggests that Japanese manufactured ceramics dominate the assemblage. Of the twenty bowls and cups, 80% (n=16) are of Japanese manufacture. It is notable that no non-Japanese manufactured bowls are represented. Of the fifteen individual plates identified, 53% (n=8) are of Japanese manufacture.

At least two patterns represented among the Japanese plates are well documented as export ceramics, often targeted at non-Japanese markets, known as “phoenix bird pattern” and “geisha girl” ceramics.<sup>14</sup> For the remaining ceramics of Japanese origin, it is unclear what markets they were intended for. While some of these ceramics have “Made in

Japan” stamps, suggesting they were produced for export, others do not, which suggests they were either not formally exported from Japan or were exported before the passage of the 1890 McKinley Tariff Act which mandated that the country of origin must be marked in imported goods.

Thus far, only three manufacturers have been identified amongst the European and American manufactured ceramics based on the maker’s marks stamped on their bases (Table 2). Of note, one plate contains a mark reading “Haviland France/ Haviland & Co” as well as a seller’s mark, “Nathan Dohrmann Co” referring to the market which sold the item. The Nathan- Dohrmann Company was a ceramics market based out of San Francisco which also acted as a wholesaler to various shops throughout California. Several newspaper articles announce trips from representatives from the Nathan-Dohrmann Company visiting Santa Barbara County to sell to local shops, suggesting ways that such an item might have entered into this assemblage.<sup>15</sup> Further, shops in downtown Santa Barbara regularly advertised selling Haviland porcelain, such as the Hunt Mercantile Company, located on the 800 block of State Street.<sup>16</sup>

The finds from archaeological excavations in *Nihonmachi* suggest a mixture of local, national, and transnational commercial ties. These results are in accord with finds at other Japanese American sites in California such as San Luis Obispo and Terminal Island.<sup>17</sup> Items such as the Red Cross Drug Company bottle show residents of *Nihonmachi* maintained commercial ties to local merchants near to the neighborhood. Such finds are further suggestive of other commercial connections. For instance, the Haviland porcelain may have been purchased across the street from the Red Cross Drug Store at the Hunt Mercantile Company. The Nathan-Dohrmann stamp further alludes to larger trade networks across the state of California, while medicine manufacturers such as Upjohn, Imperial Cement, and Hall & Ruckel show use of nationally branded products.



Artifact #492. Glass bottle fragments with embossed writing reading “山崎帝國堂” (trans: Yamazaki Teikokudo). Photo by Koji Lau Ozawa.



Artifact #637. Small porcelain plate with "Phoenix Bird Pattern" design. Photo by Koji Lau Ozawa.



Artifact #638. Small porcelain plate with "Geisha Girl" design. Photo by Koji Lau Ozawa.

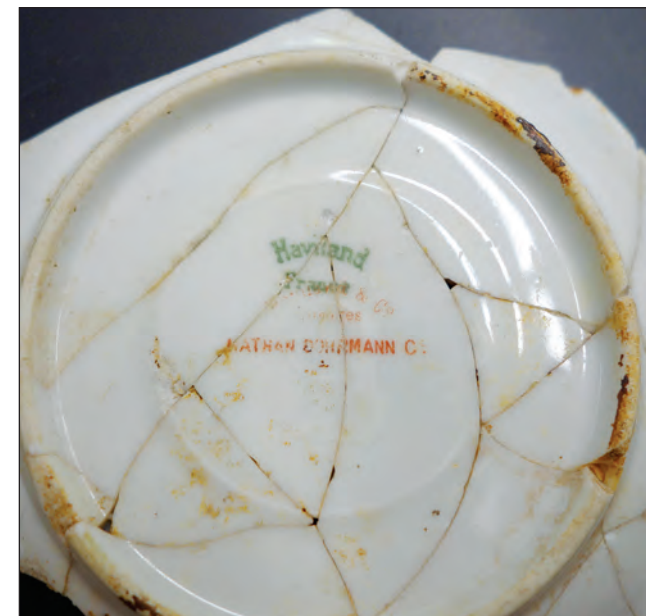
From the presence of medicines from Japan, *Nihonmachi* residents were also likely receiving materials from transnational commercial networks. Utilizing the Hoover Institution's *Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection* (<https://hojishinbun.hoover.org/>), an online database of historic Japanese language newspapers, the cosmopolitan nature of these products becomes clear. Japanese language newspapers in San Francisco, Seattle, Hawai'i, Brazil, Korea and Shanghai contain advertisements for medicines produced by Yamazaki Teikokudo and Santendo. Consumers in Santa Barbara's *Nihonmachi* were utilizing the same products as people in Japan, but also members of the Japanese diaspora in various communities across the Pacific world.

### Conclusion

Archaeological work at Santa Barbara's *Nihonmachi* is ongoing. Assemblages from past collections still need to be examined, and as excavations continue, it is likely that more materials related to the *Nihonmachi* period will be uncovered. Early analysis is promising, suggesting multi-scalar trade and consumer networks that the residents of the neighborhood were tapped into. Japanese Americans

shopped locally and globally. As the small number of identifiable ceramics suggests thus far, tables were set with items from Japan as well as European and American wares. Medicine cabinets were filled with remedies from the local drug store as well as from Japan. Consumers were engaging in markets at multiple scales.

In his hallmark work, *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson argues that an essential component of forming national identity lay in citizens of nation-states reading shared print media.<sup>18</sup> The shared experience of reading the same news creates bonds with the millions of other members of the imagined community. At the same time, theorists of consumption like Daniel Miller have argued that the process of shopping is an inherently social act, affirming relationships within households, and perhaps between merchants and customers.<sup>19</sup> The materials from this trash deposit in *Nihonmachi*, suggest that residents were purchasing ceramics and medicines which connected them to a shared experience with thousands of others across the Japanese diaspora. Cosmopolitan shoppers creating distinct patterns of consumption along with people across the globe. This does not mean that there is a single pattern of Japanese diasporic material culture. As Paul Gilroy argues, the culture of diaspora blends distinctly local and transnational elements.<sup>20</sup> In *Nihonmachi*, manifestations of the Japanese diaspora are mediated through a distinctly Santa Barbara lens. Future work with materials from this site promises to elucidate more of these elements and broaden understandings of both the local community and the wider Japanese diaspora.



Artifact #635. Porcelain plate with "Haviland France / Haviland & Co Limoges / Nathan Dohrmann Co" stamped on base. Photo by Koji Lau-Ozawa.

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A view of the Jimmy's Exhibit located on the back interior wall of the Pickle Room, formerly Jimmy's Oriental Gardens, located in the Presidio Neighborhood. Photo by Michael H. Imwalle.

## Progress in Preservation: Story of Jimmy's Oriental Gardens and the Chung Family in New Exhibit

The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation has completed a new exhibit inside the Pickle Room (located at 126 E. Canon Perdido Street) illuminating the history of part of Santa Barbara's New Chinatown. Jimmy's Oriental Gardens, the last Chinese family-owned and -operated business in Santa Barbara's New Chinatown, was a longtime favorite for locals and tourists alike before closing its doors in 2006 with the retirement of operator Tommy Chung. The display includes a life-size photo mural of Jimmy Chung and his son Bill serving drinks to local patrons at the bar, as well as multiple oral history quotes and photos that tell the story of the Chung family and the life they created in Santa Barbara's Presidio Neighborhood. The display includes original artifacts from Jimmy's Oriental Gardens, as well.

The display is dedicated to the memory of Thomas Yee Chung and Robert Harry Lovejoy for their efforts to preserve and restore Jimmy's Oriental Gardens, an icon of Santa Barbara's Chinese-American community. Special thanks to UCSB graduate student Mika Thornburg, Demachkie Design, SBTHP's dedicated volunteers, our partners at California State Parks and all community donors that made this special project possible.

## Presidio Neighborhood Spotlight: Divinitree Yoga Studio Uses Casa de la Guerra Courtyard for Outdoor Yoga Classes

Q&A with Divinitree Yoga Studio owner, Jill Agonias.

**H**ow did the idea to use the Casa de la Guerra courtyard for outdoor Divinitree yoga classes come about?

Our studio is located two doors down from Casa de la Guerra, so almost every night after work I would pass by the courtyard. It would always catch my eye when the lights illuminated the space and reflected off the trees. I knew that I wanted to host classes there eventually, but never had a need to since we were operating in a fully functional indoor space just steps away. The pandemic has encouraged many business owners, like myself, to think creatively. The outdoor-only mandate was just the push I needed to reach out to SBTHP to see what the possibilities were. Gratefully, we've been hosting classes at Casa de la Guerra since November 2020 and all of our students love it!

*Has utilizing the courtyard space helped keep your business and practice operating during the pandemic, and how have the classes been going?*



Divinitree Yoga class in Casa de la Guerra courtyard in winter 2020. Photo by Ingrid Bostrom.

host classes at Casa De La Guerra every weeknight at 5:30 PM under the stars. It's a magical experience and our classes have been very popular.

To learn more about Divinitree Yoga Studio visit:  
[www.divinitreesantabarbara.com/studio](http://www.divinitreesantabarbara.com/studio)



### In Memoriam: Judy Pearce

by Kevin McGarry, Associate Director for Public Engagement

I first met Judy Pearce in October 2016, when I had just started working at the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP) as Director of Programs. One of my first overwhelming tasks was to plan SBTHP's annual Día de los Muertos Craft Day event, which is a free, fun-for-the-whole-family public program SBTHP hosts to both interpret and celebrate the Día de los Muertos tradition. The annual event is held each year on a Sunday afternoon in late October at Casa de la Guerra. In early October 2016, I inherited a volunteer contact spreadsheet and an event file from my predecessor, but having never participated in the program, I was immediately unsure of how I was going to prepare everything in time. One of the first people I called on the volunteer list was Judy. She answered the phone as if she was expecting me to call at that very moment. I will never forget her kind, reassuring voice that morning. She innately understood that I was a new hire, and that I was trying to put a lot of pieces together. Judy rolled up her sleeves and explained everything she could about the event to me so I would have a better picture of it in my mind. In preparation for and during the program, Judy spent countless hours in the Casa de la Guerra kitchen preparing the sugar frosting needed for our most popular craft station, Sugar Skull Decorating. During the event, she must have approached me ten times just to tell me what a great job I had done, and how glad she was that I became part of the SBTHP team. Her selflessness and kindness floored me, and it made me realize just what a special organization SBTHP is.

Judy was born in Santa Barbara in 1941 and grew up in Montecito on a family farm near the ocean. She loved horses and grew up riding through the foothills of Santa Barbara, Montecito and Carpinteria with her friends. Her love of equestrian culture might also be one of the reasons she was drawn to local history. In 1984, Judy began writing an equestrian column in the *Santa Barbara News-Press*, and later became a contributing writer to *Montecito Magazine* and the *Montecito Journal*. Judy loved teaching kids about local history and volunteered at numerous organizations. At SBTHP she became a docent and volunteer, providing countless interactive school group tours at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park. Judy helped SBTHP staff plan two large annual events each year, Día de los Muertos Craft Day and Una Noche de Las Posadas. She was a member of El Coro, the SBTHP-sponsored volunteer choir that leads the singing of songs in Spanish at our annual Las Posadas event each December. Judy was not just a dedicated and talented educator, but a larger-than-life presence at our educational events and programs, always wearing a bright flower in her hair. I will miss her grit and her wit at these programs most.

Judy fought cancer in her last year of life. She passed away in her Carpinteria home on September 14, 2020. She is survived by her husband Steve, her children Kathy, Tom, Karen and Sara, and her eight grandchildren. Although I didn't know Judy very long, she had an indelible impact on me from our first conversation. Her passion and kindness will continue to inspire me every day I have the privilege of doing this work. We offer our sincerest sympathies to Judy's family and friends. 🌸



From left: Judy Pearce poses with fellow volunteers Maria Sanchez and Diane and Russell Ruiz, at SBTHP's 2017 Día de los Muertos Craft Day. Photo by Fritz Olenberger.



## Remembering Jack Romero

by Jim Elwell Martinez

The sad news of the passing of one of our own *soldados* was devastating to many of us, especially his wife, Marie, and his two daughters, Tammy and Elizabeth. Jack was born in Santa Barbara to Bill and Frances Romero. Early in life, Jack was in the tree-hauling business, and at times one could find him bartending at his father's business, Step In Bar, located at 13 East Haley Street back in the 1960s.

Jack and his family were very active participants in the annual Fiesta celebrations in Santa Barbara, and with the Native Sons and Daughters heritage groups. A great cyclist, Jack could often be found on the road to Ventura, Carpinteria or Goleta. He loved to ride at any given time of day. Jack loved to talk with everyone and was known to be quite the "jokester." If you ask his wife she will tell you how much he loved to be active and engage with people.

Jack went to Santa Barbara High School, and he used to always say, "Once a Don, always a Don." He rarely missed a home football game. Back in the day, Christmas trees lined the length of State Street and it was Jack's job to turn on their lights every night. He enjoyed Christmas, and on many occasions played the role of Santa Claus. Through the years, Jack was given many affectionate nicknames by his friends. One that always stood out was, "General Jack, The Ladies Man."

It was because of his aunt and uncle, Margarita and Leroy Villa, that Jack



Jack Romero interpreting a Presidio soldado at SBTHP's Early California Days school program in 2008. Photo courtesy of Presidio Research Center.

began participating in many of the events and programs showcased by SBTHP. I was *Comandante* of Los Soldados at the time Jack first showed interest. I met with Jack and I remember him telling me that he loved the idea of marching as a soldado. He asked to sign up, and he learned very quickly and loved it. He never missed a meeting or a training session. Our *soldados* group traveled all over California, from Los Angeles to San Francisco. We even traveled to Tubac Presidio State Historic Park in Arizona to represent the Santa Barbara Presidio there.




Jack Romero (left) with fellow Soldados (from left) Russell Ruiz, David Martinez, Roger Knox and Jim Martinez at SBTHP's 50th Anniversary Celebration at the historic El Paseo Restaurant in 2013. Photo by Brittany Avila.

Jack was right there, for every trip, leading our detachment of Soldados through the wilderness, from Tumacácori to Tubac.

Jack was a descendant of José Esteban Romero, a soldado who came on Governor Felipe de Neve's expedition to colonize the Santa Barbara channel in 1782. Jack was very proud of his heritage and culture, and this pride showed through his character and military semblance. He was part of a long line of gentlemen who reenacted and interpreted the unique life of the Santa Barbara presidio soldier,

known as "El Soldado de Cuera." That line of gentlemen includes Leroy Villa, George Obern, Richard Lugo, Ben Valenzuela, and George "Bud" Decker, all now deceased.

We will all miss Jack for his friendship and his kindness. May God's comfort go out to his widow Marie, his daughters, his grandchildren, and all his friends and family. And so... it was. 



## A Tribute to George W. "Bud" Decker, Jr.

by Mary Louise Days

**B**ud Decker was the ultimate volunteer for the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, beginning in 1968 until his death on December 1, 2020. His involvement began as a citizen volunteer for archaeological investigations at the Presidio Chapel site. Bud was excavation director for work conducted at the site from February 1968 until November 1968. The third summary report for archaeological excavations was published in 1969 by the volunteers for the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, coordinated by Lynn R. Spear. The illustrated report included lists of participants, headed by Bud Decker, and maps of the site drawn to scale by Bud. Decades later he designed and constructed gun carriages for the replica Spanish *lantacas* (small cannons) used by the Soldados at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park.

George W. Decker, Jr. was born in Elyria, Ohio on April 7, 1925. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from 1943 to 1946 and then attended Rose Polytechnic Institute, graduating from Kent State University. He and his wife Pam Decker moved to Santa Barbara in 1954. He was employed by research firms, retiring from Applied Magnetics Corp. in 1989. Active in civic work, he was a member of the Santa Barbara Citizens' General Plan Committee in the early 1960s.

The informal volunteers group of SBTHP sponsored fundraising events to support archaeological excavations at the Presidio Chapel site. Bud Decker served as events chair for the Presidio Volunteers. In August 1968 a steak barbecue was held at Oak Park. Tickets were \$3 each. Russell Antonio Ruiz, artist/historian member of the Volunteers, had drawn a regional map to indicate the Presidio's location. This and other

printed materials were distributed at the event, to which descendants of Presidio families and other history buffs were invited. More barbecues and civic events followed. In 1970 a wine tasting party at the Covarrubias Adobe was overseen by Bud's wife Pam and reported on by Bud in the third issue of *La Campana*.

Regular meetings were held at the East Mason Street home of Lynn Spear and his wife Mary Spear. Lynn was chairman of the group, which eventually numbered over thirty-five persons. In August 1969 the board of the SBTHP approved formation of the Presidio Volunteers as a committee of SBTHP. The Volunteers then held organizational meetings, electing Lynn Spear chairman and Mary Louise Days as secretary. By 1974 Bud was chair of the Volunteers.

Russell Clay Ruiz, son of Russell Antonio and Alice Ruth Clay Ruiz, recalls that Bud Decker would "drive my parents and I to" Volunteers meetings in his "white Rambler station wagon." He described Bud as "a kind hearted, wonderful man" who was "methodical and applied attention to detail in his archaeological efforts with the Volunteers." Russell said Bud was upbeat and had a "can-do attitude about everything, especially the Presidio." Bud "was a shining example

of the Greatest Generation for all to observe in action" concluded Russell Clay Ruiz. Kristina Wilkinson Foss, also a Presidio Volunteer, remembered Bud Decker as "such a sweet guy without thought of self-aggrandizement." This writer witnessed the phenomenon of Bud quickly identifying each and every World War II aircraft that flew over downtown Santa Barbara during a Veterans Day observance at the Presidio.

In 1969 the Presidio Volunteers originated the practice of reenactors costumed as soldados (soldiers) serving at El Presidio de Santa Barbara. Uniforms were made by Alice Ruth Ruiz, Mary Spear, Virginia Scott, and others. The designs were authenticated



Soldados Russell Ruiz, Bud Decker (center) and Tim Martínez in 1993. Photo courtesy of Presidio Research Center.

by Russell Antonio Ruiz. Bud Decker wore an officer's uniform while giving a well-publicized tour of the Chapel dig site to a large gathering of Girl Scouts in June 1972. Volunteers dressed as *soldados* marched in many Fiesta and patriotic parades. For quite a while Bud acted as a uniformed Presidio guide every Saturday. The Soldados group itself was organized in April 1990 and Bud Decker "assumed the role of Alférez (Ensign)," according to Michael Hardwick, who drafted a set of bylaws with Bud. In 1995 Bud portrayed Alférez José Dario Arguello during the visit of Spain's Prince Felipe de Borbón y Grecia (now King Felipe VI) to the Presidio State Historic Park.

*La Campana* began as the newsletter of the Presidio Volunteers committee in January, 1970, at the suggestion of Jeremy D. Hass. Lynn Spear was editor. By 1975 Tina Wilkinson was editor. These early issues contained history selections by Russell Antonio Ruiz and event reports from Bud Decker. In January 2006 George W. "Bud" Decker, Jr. was named a Life Honorary Member of SBTHP. He narrated a memoir to its oral history collection in 2012. He also donated his reenactor uniform to the Trust. Bud's collection of files was given to the Presidio Research Center.

Bud Decker was a special person, and the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation is very fortunate to have received his unique talents and his devoted volunteerism for fifty-three years, most of its existence.



Bud Decker educating students about the daily life of the Presidio soldados at SBTHP's Early California Days school program in 2011. Photo by Michael H. Imwalle.



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July 1 – December 31, 2020

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation counts on the support of its members and donors. SBTHP gratefully acknowledges the membership gifts and donations received between July 1 and December 31, 2020. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy; please contact SBTHP at (805) 966-5378 to report an error or omission.

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