



## E-NEWS FROM TILE HERITAGE

January  2005



### Happy New Year!

The winter months in coastal northern California can be cold and wet with snow levels dropping to 2000 feet on occasion, resulting in a nice dusting of white on the tops of the surrounding mountains. Brightening the dreary days is the lingering harvest of red berries of Hawthorne that prevail for several months before their pink and white flowers appear in the spring.

### Touring The Netherlands

An opportunity has presented itself that we can't resist, and we are inviting you to join us and a small group of other tile enthusiasts to visit The Netherlands in late May. The primary purpose of the trip will be to attend the opening of "**Industrial Tiles 1840 – 1940**," an exhibition of decorative tiles from five European countries that is opening at the tile museum in Otterlo on May 28, 2005.

Over the following four days we will tour with tile historian **Hans van Lemmen** and tilemaker/conservator **Joop van der Werf** looking at tiles in situ, visiting private collections, tile factories and museums in Utrecht, Zaandam, Friesland, Leeuwarden, Harlingen, Delft and Gouda. We will be staying in one hotel, the Golden Tulip in Zaandam, just 12 minutes by train to/from Amsterdam-centre and 16 minutes by train from Schiphol Airport.



**Dates:** Arrive in Amsterdam on Friday, May 27th (or before), then by train to the hotel. Departure from the hotel will be Thursday, June 2nd, by train back to Amsterdam.

**Size of tour:** minimum 15 (maximum 20). We will be taking reservations on a first-come-first-served basis. We will have a short waiting list as necessary.

**Fees:** We're working on it! You will be expected to pay for your own airfare to and from The Netherlands, your hotel accommodation (we will make a reservation for you for 6 nights, inc. breakfast), train transportation, dinners each evening, gratuities, etc. (The Golden Tulip is charging about \$180 per night for a "deluxe" room with twin beds, roughly \$25 more for a King.)



The THF fee will include the buses we need to hire; all lunches that we pre-arrange, group gratuities, museum fees and a nominal, tax-deductible donation to Tile Heritage. Let us suggest in advance that if you are a tile maker, you might plan to pack two of your special tiles, signed and dated, one for Hans and one for Joop, as a “thank you.”

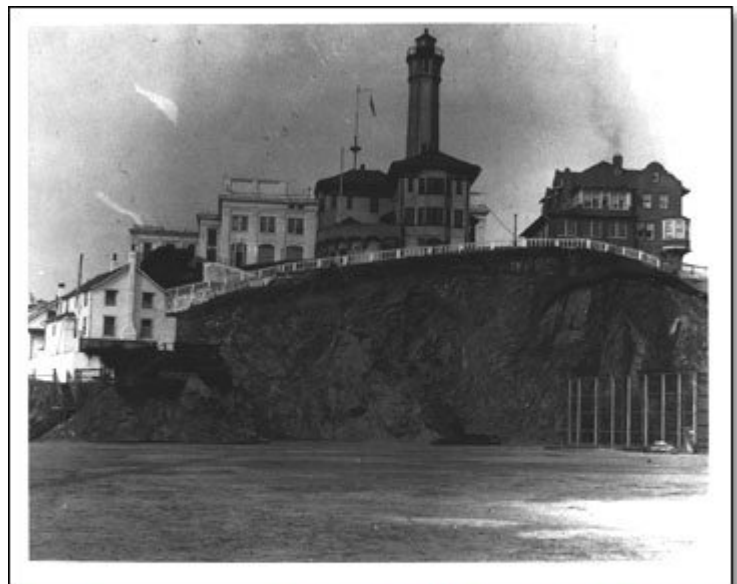


**Tiles, mostly Dutch, that will be seen during the tile tour in The Netherlands. From Industrial Tiles 1840 to 1940.**

**Deadline:** February 15th for getting your name on the list, the sooner the better. If you are interested but need a defined cost for the tour, email us. We should have a definite figure as well as a detailed itinerary by the end of January, but don’t wait until then to express your interest, as the tour will be full!  
**Hope you can join us.**

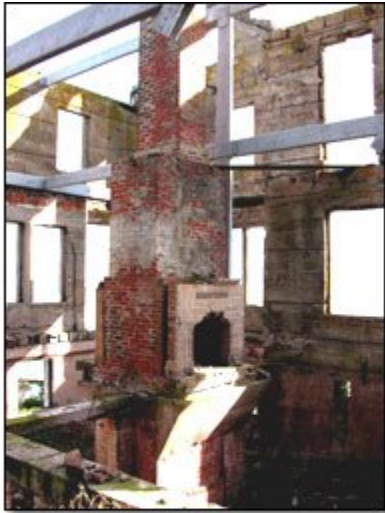
## Tiles on Alcatraz

Alcatraz Island is known by most Americans today for its abandoned federal penitentiary or for its handful of legendary prisoners. Strategically located just inside the Golden Gate in the middle of San Francisco Bay, La Isla de Las Alcatrazes (Island of the Pelicans) was first named by Juan Manuel de Ayala, who sailed into the bay aboard his Spanish warship in 1775. California purchased the island from the Mexican government in 1847, and within a few years the United States established a military fortification there as well as a facility for holding war prisoners. Over the years from the Civil War, through the various Indian wars, the Spanish American War and later World War I, the facilities were gradually enlarged by the military to house a wide assortment of war criminals. It wasn’t until the mid-1930s that the U.S. Justice Department took control and set up the maximum-security prison.



**Southern exposure of Alcatraz in 1926 showing the Warden's House on the right with smoke rising from its chimney. San Francisco Public Library. San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection.**





**The chimney in the Warden's House as it appears today. Note the tile mantel of the west facing fireplace.**

Perched atop the "Rock" is what remains of an impressive Mission Revival-style home, the Warden's House, that had 17 large rooms with windows providing sweeping views of the Golden Gate Bridge and the San Francisco skyline. Completed in 1921 at a cost of \$12,000, it was originally the residence of the military commandant and was later assumed by James A. Johnston, the first of four wardens to occupy the house.

We had heard for years that there were tiles on the fireplace in the Warden's House, but we'd never visited the island to verify the stories. In mid-December we were invited by Susan Cohn to join her and Ranger Jayeson Vance for an extraordinary private tour. I will not list all the park rules that we violated that day. Suffice it to say,

we discovered not one but two Batchelder fireplace mantels, back to back! The one facing west can actually be seen by passersby; the other that faces east is totally hidden from view.



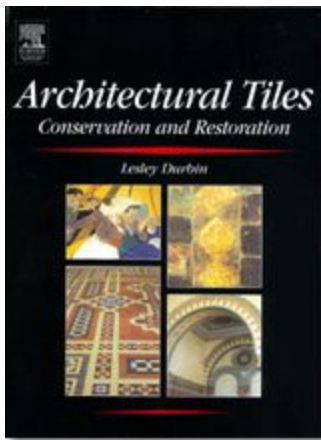
**Detail of the west facing fireplace mantel showing the Batchelder tiles made in Los Angeles in 1921.**



**The east facing fireplace mantel of Batchelder tiles on the backside of the chimney, unable to be seen by the public.**

In the spring of 1970, during the Native American occupation of the island, a fire of mysterious origin ravaged the building, leaving the shell that we see today.

In 1972, Alcatraz became part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and is now managed by the National Park Service. The island is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Bay Area. The Park Service has been supplied with information about Ernest Batchelder and a copy of a Batchelder tile catalog.



## Book Review

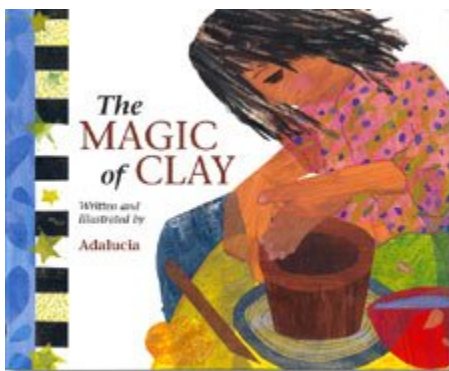
### **Architectural Tiles, Conservation and Restoration**

by Lesley Durbin. Press: Elsevier, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005 (ISBN 0-750658320) 203 pages. 194 black and white pictures and occasional color. **\$59.95**. Available from Buckland Books. Email: [buckland.books@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:buckland.books@tiscali.co.uk).

*As I reviewed this important new book on the conservation and restoration of tiles, I was listening to Sir James Gallway, flutist extraordinaire, with his appropriately fluid, melodious and embracing accompaniment. Lesley Durbin's book is broad and far reaching, beyond what the title implies. She is thorough in her approach beginning with the introduction that covers tiles from medieval pavements to early 20th century interiors. A thoughtful consideration of tile making, both past and present, is included as a major point of reference in discussing the degradation associated with the different manufacturing techniques from the different time periods including how to arrest and repair the damage. A rich array of tile topics is discussed, among them Delftware and nineteenth century tiles. The text continues with a meticulous, instructional narrative of methods of conservation: surveys, cleaning, the removal of salts and paint, dealing with mortars and grouts, and the continued care of historically important materials. The author also covers tools, useful products and health safety issues. There is a fine index and appendix of sources as well as a bibliography and reference section.*

*The book is a reference resource for the conservation and restoration of tiles, an important tool for anyone engaged in the care and keeping of historic tiles in situ or for someone who may wish to remove tiles and care for them responsibly. There are many black and white images of tiles showing different types of damage as well as many before and after conservation pictures. There are few images showing the process of removing installed tiles. The book is designed to be read and referred to; it is not a hands-on, step-by-step, illustrated manual of restoration and conservation processes (something we can look forward to in the future!). The text is in British English but is readily translatable to the American vernacular. All in all, I believe it to be a well-researched, useful publication for a select audience.*

Sheila A. Menzies, director Tile Heritage Foundation



## New Book

### **The Magic of Clay by Adalucia Quan.**

Cholita Prints & Publishing, Santa Fe NM. 2003. ISBN 0-9742956-0-4

This is a delightful introduction to working with clay. It is geared to children but readers of all ages will be drawn in to the magic of clay. The author, who is both a clay artist and an illustrator, illustrates it. Adalucia has five other bilingual (Spanish /English) children's titles to her credit. The Magic of Clay is not only a teaching tool that will be welcomed by clay artists and educators but it will inspire its readers to want to work

with clay. The illustrations are colorful, instructive and amusing and make complex concepts interesting and easy to understand.

**Hardbound \$18.95 (A).** Available from the Tile Heritage Foundation. Add 7.5% sales tax if ordered in California and \$3 to cover shipping/handling. The book is in stock.