

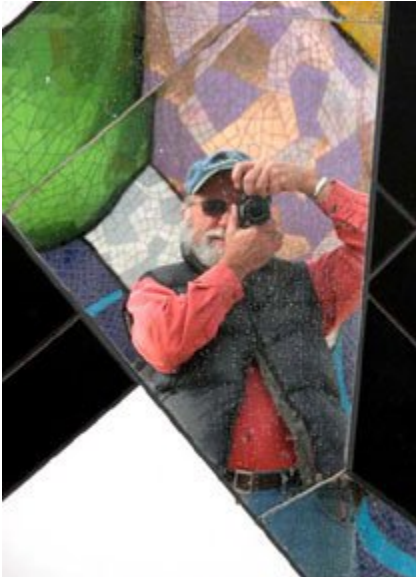


E-NEWS FROM TILE HERITAGE

January



2006



Joe Taylor focuses on a Queen's photographer.

happy new year

Here's What's Below:

Happy (and wet) New Year!
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New Year's Eve: A Time to Pull on Our "Wellies"

In the few days prior to New Year's Eve, Healdsburg, California, home of the Tile Heritage Foundation, we experienced multiple rainstorms propelled by what we call "The Pineapple Express," fierce weather moving across the Pacific Ocean bringing warm, heavy rains and wind to the Sonoma County Coast. We are situated on (in!) the Russian River thirty miles from its Pacific Ocean estuary and are affected by both the tides and the amount of water the Army Corps elects to release from Lake Mendocino north of us, in addition, of course, to the rainfall throughout the river valley itself. The net result can mean flooding in the Russian River Valley where we live. On December 31st the water inundated our lower yard to a depth of about 4 feet but was of no imminent threat to our home or the THF archives. However it is an amazing sight, such a volume of water flying past us. We are humbled by the strength and beauty of Mother Nature and our respect is palpable.



Tile Heritage in flood.
New Year's Eve '05.



Important Deadlines

February 3, 2006. Entries for the Spectrum Awards and the Prism Awards, as reported in last month's "E-News." For details on Spectrum go to www.coverings.com/spectrum-awards-3.html and for Prism www.coverings.com/prism-awards-3.html

February 6, 2006. Postmark date for slides, fee and entry form for the 16th National Ceramic Competition hosted by The San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts in San Angelo, Texas as reported in last month's "E-News." For more details and an entry form go to www.samfa.org/NCC/ncc_2006.htm.

Reminder of Upcoming Events

As reported last month Kirby Brown's lecture, **California Faience of Berkeley: A Family Perspective** will be held on **Thursday evening, January 26th** at The Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar Street in Berkeley. We will be there, and we hope to see you!

"Beneath the Surface," the **SAMA conference in Chicago, March 15-19!**
For details go to www.americanmosaics.org.

Coverings, April 4-7, in Orlando. No other event in the Americas can claim as much tile and stone buying power in one place at one time as Coverings! For more information, go to www.coverings.com.

September 13-17, 2006 for "Tiles of the Northern Plains: Building on Tradition" in Minneapolis presented by the Handmade Tile Association and the Tile Heritage Foundation. Details forthcoming.

TILE HERITAGE											
January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1 AMC vs. Copeston Coke Home	2 TAMU vs. Oklahoma Duke Away	3	4	5 Meeting	6	7 AMC vs. Brown High Field	8	9 TAMU vs. OU Home	10	11 Hawthorne Away	12 Meeting
13	14 Association	15 Football Playoffs?	16 Football Playoffs?	17	18 Meeting	19	20	21	22	23 TAMU vs. Missouri Home	24 Wabbe vs. Woods
25	26	27	28 THF vs. UT Away	29	30 Basketball	31	1 TAMU vs. UT Away	2	3	4	5



THF board dines out. From the right:
Irene de Watterville, Donna Billick, Donna's friend Steven MacNear,
Riley Doty, Joe Taylor. Sheila Menzies is taking the picture.



From the right: Sheila Menzies, Deirdre Lee, Kim Emerson, Robin Brailsford and our host, Irene de Watteville.

San Diego: A Good Mix of Business and Pleasure

On December 16th **Tile Heritage** held its 4th quarter board meeting in Solana Beach, California at the home of board member Irene de Watteville. In honor of the presence of the entire board, Irene arranged and hosted a wonderful evening party inviting local THF members, tile makers, tile artisans and mosaicists, resulting in a celebration of good food, wine, music and dance while overlooking the Pacific Ocean.



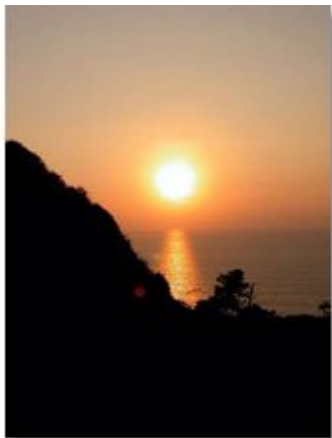
Maiolica artist Ivette Vaillard.

some of Greene and Greene's historic Pasadena houses, the Lodge shows a respect for history that's rare on the prefabricated Southern California coastline. And all the more impressive is the fact that



Another fireplace at the Lodge at Torrey Pines.

When you visit, check out the two impressive, tiled fireplaces in the hotel's parlors. If you happen to know the maker, please let us know. Laird says they are not his. Torrey Pines State Reserve is located adjacent to the hotel and yet remains one of the wildest stretches of land on



Sunset from Torrey Pines State Reserve.

the Southern California coast. Because of the efforts and foresight of the people in this area, 2000 acres of land are as they were before San Diego was developed — with the chaparral plant community, the rare and elegant Torrey Pine trees, unspoiled beaches and a lagoon that is vital to migrating seabirds. One can imagine what California must have looked like to the early settlers, or to the Spanish explorers, or even to the first residents here, the Kumeyaay people.

That afternoon **tile maker Laird Plumleigh** took some of us on a hike of the **Torrey Pines State Reserve, north of La Jolla**. But first a tour of the new Lodge at Torrey Pines. Designed in a remarkably authentic Arts and Crafts style, and patterned after Rookwood ceramist turned wildflower illustrator, who moved to the San Diego area at the beginning of the 20th century. In addition to the hotel's restaurant named after him, there is a handsome display case with samples of his ceramic work.



Fireplace at the Lodge at Torrey Pines.



Eroding sandstone formations at Torrey Pines State Reserve.

Mosaic Magic: Niki de Saint Phalle

In **Escondido, California**, within a 12-acre natural habitat, in the **Iris Sankey Arboretum** in Kit Carson Park, the late Niki de Saint Phalle (1930-2002) created a unique mosaic masterpiece, the only American sculpture garden of its kind and the last of her major international projects. Queen Califia's Magical Circle, inspired by California's mythic, historic

and cultural roots, measures 120 feet in diameter and consists of nine large-scale sculptures, a circular, 400-foot "snake" wall and maze entryway, sculpturally integrated bench seating, an egg-shaped fountain and native shrubs and trees planted within the interior plaza and along the outer perimeter. The garden opened to the public on October 26, 2003.



The garden, like the state itself, takes its name from the legendary black Amazon queen, Califia, who was believed to rule a terrestrial island paradise of gold and riches. Queen Califia's Magical Circle bears the brilliant, unique mosaic ornamentation that is an unmistakable part of Saint Phalle's later work. The garden uses a greater diversity of mosaic materials than any other of her large-scale projects. She personally selected dozens of varieties of glass of different shapes, color, hue, translucency and degrees of reflection. For the first time, she also used a wide assortment of polished and tumbled stones such as travertine, agates, quartzes and veined turquoise. The results are magical and ever changing, as the movement of light, wind, color and reflections continually transform the garden.

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Niki de Saint Phalle was born in 1930 in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France, and raised in New York City. She began painting in 1948, moved four years later to Europe (Nice, Paris and Mallorca) and first came to international prominence in 1961 as a member of the influential "New Realists," a group that also included Christo, Yves Klein and Jean Tinguely (her frequent collaborator whom she married in 1971). Today, she is best known for her oversized, voluptuous female figures, the Nanas, which can be seen in cities and museums around the world. Among her large-scale installations are The Stravinsky Fountain near the Centre Pompidou in Paris (1983), The

Tarot Garden at Garavicchio in southern Tuscany (which was entirely financed by the artist and opened after twenty-four years of work in 1998) and The Grotto in Hannover's Royal Herrenhausen Garden (2003).





Saint Phalle continued living near Paris until 1994 when, for reasons of poor health (brought about by exposure to toxic fumes from polyester materials used in her early sculptures), she moved to La Jolla, California. "California has been a rebirth for my soul and an earthquake for my eyes—sea, desert, mountains, wide open sky, brilliance of light and vastness of space," she once remarked. "I have embraced another way of life, and have let my discovery of this landscape manifest itself in my work."



Always interested in expanding the audience for contemporary art, she created Queen Califia as a place for families to gather, play and engage with a visually rich world of ideas, symbols, and forms. "My first really big piece for kids was the Golem



[completed in 1970 in Jerusalem] and three generations know and love it. Here [in Escondido], you can also touch the sculptures," Saint Phalle said in one of her last interviews. "They feel nice and you won't harm them. You can be a part of them ... it's like a marriage between the sculptures and the child or adult. Maybe it brings out the child in adults, too."

Visit www.queencalifa.org for additional details.

Balboa Park: Reflecting an Earlier Era

It was in 1868 that city leaders in San Diego set aside a 1,400-acre tract of land for a public park. Known as simply City Park until a contest was held in 1910, Balboa Park was **named after the Spanish conquistador, Vasco Núñez de Balboa**, purportedly the first European to see the Pacific.



Alcazar Garden, Balboa Park.

of architecture prevailed in the exposition's buildings that were designed by the well-known **architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue of New York**. Among those still standing is the California Building (now the Museum of Man), where you will find brightly-colored, decorative tiles produced by California China Products Company of National City. This installation, along with the one at the San Diego Railroad Depot, is historically among the most important in the state.

As a way of bolstering the local economy in the midst of the Great Depression, San Diego held the California-Pacific International

The park came into its own as in 1915–1916 it became the site for the Panama-California International Exposition, honoring the completion of the Panama Canal. The purpose of the Expo was "to illustrate the progress and possibility of the human race...." Displays and demonstrations included the latest in agricultural, industrial, horticultural, and technological inventions and refinements.

The Spanish Colonial Revival style

Exposition in the Park in 1935-36. The expo's architect,

Richard Requa, designed buildings inspired by the native architecture of the Southwest—the Indian pueblos as well as the earlier Aztec and Mayan structures in Yucatan and Mexico.

Alcazar Garden, named because its design is patterned after the gardens of Alcazar Castle in Seville, Spain, is directly across El Prado from the

California Building. It is known for its ornate fountains, exquisite turquoise blue, yellow, and green Moorish-style tiles and shady pergola. The tiles were produced by D. & M. Tile Company of Los Angeles. Today, the garden has been reconstructed to replicate Requa's 1935 design.



Ornate tower of the California Bldg (now The Museum of Man), Balboa Park.



Central fountain in the Alcazar Garden. Note the damage to the tilework from skateboarders and the barrier posts recently installed to minimize further harm.



Alcazar Garden bench with D. & M. tiles dating to 1935.



Plaza de Panama Fountain, Balboa Park, ceramic work fabricated by Laird Plumleigh.

Working with officials of the City of San Diego, Balboa Park, Estrada Land Planning and Soltec Construction, **Laird Plumleigh designed, sculpted and finished the ceramic cladding that now adorns the Plaza de Panama Fountain in Balboa Park.** The patterns and colors in the tile work were designed in Hispano-Moresque style to be consistent with the cultural surroundings of Balboa Park. Located in the center of the park on El Prado in front of the San Diego Museum of Art, the fountain is identified as an important part of the restoration of Plaza de Panama to its historic role as a pedestrian-oriented, paved and landscaped area.



Edith Heath, founder of Heath Ceramics, at home in Tiburon, California, 1992.

A Legend Lost: Edith Heath

Edith Heath, a leading ceramist of mid-century modern designs, **known for her tableware and architectural tiles, died at her home in Tiburon, California on December 27, 2005.** She was 94. According to Bill Stern, executive director of the Museum of California Design in Los Angeles, “Edith was at the forefront of the move to modernist design that influenced architecture and furniture as well as ceramics.”

The movement began in the 1930s and grew stronger in the '40s. She was known for creating simple shapes inspired by Japanese tableware. Through most of her career she worked on a commercial scale but achieved a level of

artistry generally associated with handcrafted work.

Edith began her design career making pots. Her first museum exhibit was at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco in 1944. Her designs and tableware were sold in specialty stores throughout the United States.



The Norton Simon Museum (originally the Pasadena Art Museum) designed by Ladd & Kelsey, 1967.



Detail of the Heath tile on the exterior of Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, California.

In 1967 the architectural company of Ladd & Kelsey, which designed the Pasadena Art Museum (now the Norton Simon Museum), asked Heath to create architectural tiles for the building's exterior, for which **she received the Industrial Arts Medal from the American Institute of Architects.** Among the other prestigious tile installations: Ford Foundation, New York; Mauna Kea Hotel, Hawaii; Security Pacific Bank, Los Angeles; Bank of America, San Jose; New Bank of China, Hong Kong; numerous Nordstrom stores; Yerba Buena Center, San Francisco.

Edith remained active through her 80s, selling her business, Heath Ceramics, Sausalito, California in 2003. The new owners continue to produce her original designs. Visit www.heathceramics.com.

Information taken partially from “Obituaries” in the Los Angeles Times and from Flash Point, vol. 6, no. 1, “One With Her Environment” by Genene M. Grimm.

Recipe for Relief

Dry hands from handling clay or grout and cement all day long, especially in the winter, are no fun so here is a “**recipe for relief**” passed on from **Carol Firenze**:

Wash your hands well with warm water and apply a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar to your palms, rub well and dry off your hands.

Next:

- Combine $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cornmeal and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of extra virgin olive oil
- Mix it into a paste
- Massage the cornmeal and olive oil paste into your hands for a few minutes
- Rinse with warm water
- Put a small amount (a drop) of olive oil onto your hands and massage well.

Now your hands are happy again and the bonus is that olive oil moisturizes your nails and cuticles and restores their flexibility and strength as well.

THF invites you to share illustrative pictures and favorite recipes for clay, glaze, tile making or kitchen treats with other readers.



Relief is close at hand.