

Unprecedented changes were taking place in America during the first three decades of the 20th century. It seemed to be happening everywhere, to everybody and everything — including home and hearth.

Eureka was no exception, and the Period Revival houses that were built within the city during this era reflect these changes.

“Period Revival” refers to a broad range of historically based architectural styles that Americans fell in love with from 1890 to 1940. They include Colonial and Classical revivals that honored the nation’s beginnings. There were also more worldly versions: English Tudor, French Norman, Spanish, Mission, Pueblo and Mediterranean.

All of this culminated in the 1920s, a boisterous, optimistic time when modern America came of age and horizons seemed limitless.

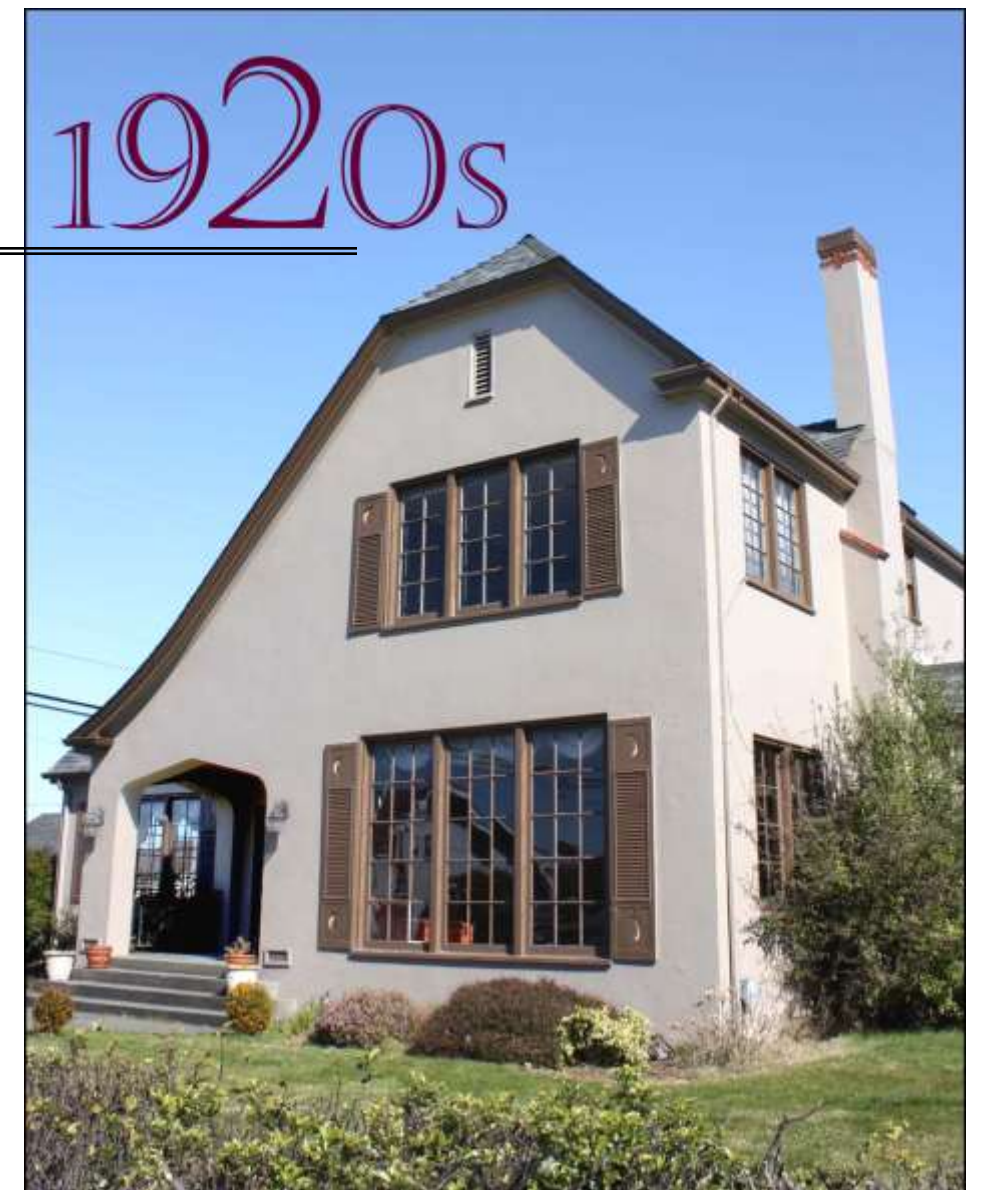
World War I — known as “the war to end all wars” — was over and a decade of prosperity was under way. This included soaring automobile sales as a vast highway infrastructure system began to crisscross the country.

Improved transportation had an especially liberating effect on once-isolated Humboldt County. Into the century’s first decade, most people could get in and out of the North Coast only by ship. Within 20 years, the railroad and highway changed all that.

The impact of technology and mass media was also being felt as electricity and modern appliances became commonplace in most homes. Radio blossomed, too, and lyrics like “Only blue skies do I see ...” were well-suited to the era.

## The 1920s

Eureka’s post-WWI Period Revival homes reflect a prosperous and stylish global age



Period Revival styles can be found in and around the Buhne Terrace area.





**Tudor and Mediterranean homes along E and D streets near Buhne were among the first Period Revivals in Eureka.**



In 1914, the Northwest Pacific Railroad finally connected Eureka to the urban south. By then some of Eureka's residential neighborhoods were already seeing changes — like those centering around Buhne Street between E and D.

One of the earliest arrivals was a Tudor style house built at Buhne and E streets in 1904 for well-to-do widow Carrie Howard. With its half-timbered upper story and gabled parapet with a segmented profile, it offered a significant change to Victorian-laden Eureka.

In 1912, a California-born version of the traditional Colonial Revival — the Mediterranean — appeared as virtual twins two blocks away on D Street. The trend continued, and by the end of the 1920s the neighborhood became an upper-class, Period Revival showplace.



Humboldt County Historical Society

**On Sept. 23, 1917, a crowd filled Eureka's train depot as the men of the second contingent of the first call in the selective service draft prepared to depart.**



Humboldt County Historical Society

Eurekans' normal way of life was interrupted in 1917 when America entered World War I. A full-page story about Humboldt County's efforts during the war appeared in the San Francisco Examiner on Aug. 12, 1918. It listed the names of the more than 400 local men in the military, the activities of the Red Cross, and how the war — via government procurements — was proving a boon to the area's creameries and the Eureka Woolen Mill. It all ended with the Armistice

on Nov. 11, 1918. Eurekans flocked into the streets, honking flag-draped cars in an impromptu parade.

Curiously, the war would have an influence on American architecture: It added the French Norman style to the Period Revival list. American soldiers, it seems, had seen them in France and liked what they saw.

Magazine articles of the day spread the word, and Period Revival houses of all types surged in the 1920s, eclipsing even the popular Craftsman-style homes.

Back in the 1910s, the Redwood Highway was being developed at a snail's pace, and by 1920 the road was passable at last. With the North Coast more accessible than ever, a group from the Eureka Chamber of Commerce formed a company to raise money to build a grand, modern hotel to attract tourists. They hired noted California architect Frank Whitton, who designed the Eureka Inn, a large Tudor-style masterpiece.

**The Eureka Inn was built in the English Tudor style in 1922.**



**Period Revival styles on G Street in Buhne Terrace include a Spanish Colonial (center) with a tiled roof.**

"Built in the half-timber style reminiscent of 16th century England, the Inn easily identifies, both architecturally and philosophically, with that period," stated historian Susie Van Kirk in the inn's 1981 National Register of Historic Places write-up.

Locals loved the inn. On Sept. 13, 1922, more than 2,000 gathered for the grand opening. Once inside they discovered Tudor finery to match the exterior. This was not usually the case for most Period Revival houses; their interiors were designed to suit modern Americans' need for comfort and practicality.

Many Period house exteriors are also "not historically 'correct' copies ... but are the architect's creative interpretation of the style," according to the Wisconsin Historical Society.

The Tudor is a prime example. Virginia and Lee McAlester, authors of the book "A Field Guide to American Houses," add that what Americans call a Tudor is "historically imprecise ... Instead the style is based on a variety of late medieval prototypes, ranging from thatch-roofed cottages to grand manor houses" that were "freely mixed in" with other styles.

English Tudor and French Norman houses can lead modern preservationists into debates about which is which. Their similarities include stucco siding, steeply pitched gables, arches, and multi-level eaves.

"Informal domestic building in north-western France shares much with medi-

eval English tradition," the McAlesters confirm.

So it is in Eureka. Several examples can be found in and around Buhne Terrace, the city's paramount Period Revival area. Stretching from F to H streets between Buhne and Carson, it was originally part of the city's Prairie Addition. Eighty acres of this land was purchased by George McFarlan in 1858 for \$1.25 an acre. Enlarged twice in the late 1800s, the land was bought by the wealthy pioneer Buhne family in 1878, and they sold it to speculators in 1922. Soon advertisements were promoting Buhne Terrace as the city's first restricted home building section.

Covenants that went along with property sales were designed to develop an upper-middle class neighborhood. Until 1935, no house could cost less than \$4,000 to build. All houses and related



**A small English Tudor from the late 1920s is located in Henderson Center.**

buildings had to be set back at least 15 feet from the street and two feet from side property lines. Finally, no building could be taller than two stories and no fence higher than five feet.

Similar homes — big, moderate and small — were also constructed nearby and around the city. Many remain a delight to this day, like the small late-1920s Tudor cottage in Henderson Center that houses Annie's shoe shop. Eurekans may have the Architects' Small House Service Bureau to thank for diminutive beauties such as this.

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## First-time homebuyers take on late 1920s Buhne Terrace house with enthusiasm

In the late 1920s, Rae and Bernice Bryan and their three children moved from a stylish Craftsman home on I Street to an even more stylish English Tudor Revival at F and Buhne streets.

Both Bernice and Rae had rural/working class backgrounds. She was born in 1893 at the Union Shingle Mill near Arcata. He was born in 1890 near Shively, and grew up on his family's ranch that was also a resort known as Bryan's Rest.

Like many of their generation, as adults they headed for the closest city — in this case, Eureka. There, along with a business partner, Rae opened the Standard Furniture Company, a firm which lasted 40 years.

The Bryan house was built in the newly developed Buhne Terrace residential section of the city, and it must have suited the family well because Bernice and Ray lived there until the 1960s.

The newest owners, Liz Knight and Chris Erb, are first-time home buyers who are hoping for a similarly long stay.

"We wanted something big that we could grow into and never, ever have to move again," Liz said.

It's a house the couple has long admired.

"We looked at it for about five years," Chris recalled, "and we said, well, if it ever comes on the market, and we could afford it, we'd do it. It did, and we could, so we bought it."

The house, Liz added, makes her feel sentimental.

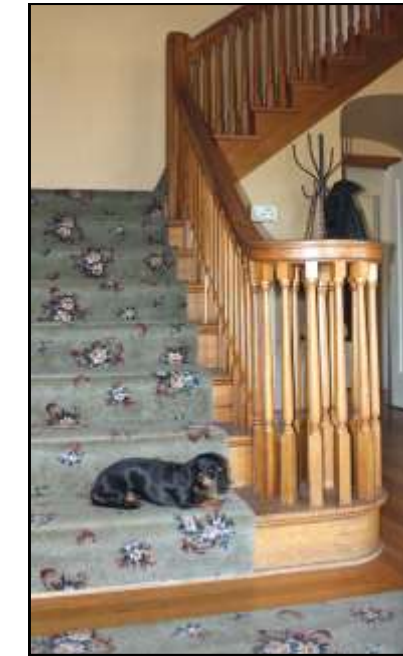
"I lived in England when I was a kid because my dad was stationed there," she explained. "So I'm sentimental about the Tudor style. I love the big windows. And it's in a neighborhood with lots of other Tudors."

Waiting more than a year for their offer on the house to be accepted, the couple moved in last December. And because the building had been sitting empty for three years, they quickly got to work.

"It had fallen into disrepair," Liz said, "so we definitely have taken on a lot. When we first moved in I had buckets lined up in multiple places in the house. When it rained outside, it rained inside."

They just had a new roof put on, but Liz and Chris hope to do much of the work themselves. Chris has already upgraded the electrical and plumbing systems and is planning to take on the sizeable project of plaster restoration.

"Twenty years ago, if you wanted to do anything, you had to get a book, and you still had no idea what you were doing," he said. "These days you can just jump on the Internet, watch



Highlights of the original part of the house include the living room, dining room and foyer with a spindle-laden banister along the staircase, where the dog of the house, Coco Chanel, poses. The kitchen also contains many elements that appear to be original.

# Tudor jewel ... American style



a video and then make sure you put it all back the same way it came apart."

Other projects will involve modern back additions to the house, including a large family room, which the couple hopes to make more complementary to the Tudor period. And Liz, especially, can't wait to begin painting throughout.

One part of the house puzzled the couple — the fireplace

mantle, which was not done in the Tudor mode.

"It didn't seem like it could be as old as the house," Liz said, "but there's that pointed arch, and I find they snuck that pattern in so many spots in this house — the doorways, the shelves."

• See MANTLE, Page 8



# The remarkable Emily Jones



The 1882 Italianate home of her birth and the 1923 Mission Revival she had built reflect noteworthy life

Emily Jones was born in a fashionable Italianate home on G Street in 1885. It was the middle of the staid Victorian era, yet a new century was on its way — and young Emily seemed innately, wholeheartedly ready for it. The daughter of revered physician Seth Foster and artist Abigail Hallowell Foster, Emily was to become known for her “first Eureka woman to ...” list. It all began when she was 18. “In 1903, when automobiles were the exception rather than the rule... Mrs. Jones owned and drove her own car, ‘the Little Red Devil,’” the Humboldt Standard reported years later.

Emily soon went on to Mills College in Oakland. In 1905 she married a chief machinist’s mate, A.K. Hittner, and moved to San Francisco. In 1906, they lost their home in the great earthquake and had to campout in Golden Gate Park. Her husband later died.

In 1915, Emily married Herman Jones, a San Francisco police sergeant. Tragedy struck again when Herman died in the city’s 1918 influenza epidemic. With two children to support, she moved back to Eureka to also care for her aging parents.

In 1923, Emily had a Mission Revival duplex built on Ninth Street, just around the corner from her parents’ home and on the same lot. For the next 32 years she lived in either one of the duplex’s rental units or in the house where she was born.

The Mission Revival style reflected California’s Hispanic heritage, yet it was relatively new for Eureka. Emily’s duplex is a simplified, stylish version with plain stucco walls, arched windows and entryway, and protruding, tiled cornices.



**Emily Jones was born in this Italianate house on G Street. It was built in 1882 and is described in the Eureka Heritage Society survey files as “exuberant and extraordinary” and “superbly ornamented.”**



**Emily Jones had this Mission Revival duplex built in 1923. (Left) Here is a portrait of Emily when she was Eureka’s mayor in 1930.**

Surrounded by older homes, the building symbolized the changes taking place not only in Eureka but around the nation in the 1920s. It was the dawn of the modern era, a time for breaking barriers.

Increasing numbers of women were going to college and working, and Emily was a prime example. Over her lifetime she worked for Western Union, the San Francisco Hall of Records, Montgomery Wards, the state’s Department of Public Welfare, the U.S. Weather Bureau and the Red Cross. In 1945, at age 60, she became a proofreader at the Humboldt Times, a job she held until shortly before her death at age 84 in 1970.

Another of Emily’s “firsts” occurred in 1927, when she bought a plane, learned to fly and advocated it as “the best of health tonics.”

“Ever since I was a little girl I have longed to fly,” she told the Standard that year. “As a child, I stood in an upstairs window in our home ... and

gazed toward Kneeland Prairie as I reflected that nothing could be more pleasant than to fly there.”

In 1920, American women won the right to vote after an eight-decades-long struggle. This paved the way for Emily’s most notable “first” in 1929, when she announced her candidacy for mayor of her hometown. She ran on a platform of “good, clean ideas” and “good, clean conditions.” On June, 17, 1929, she won by a margin of 203 votes to become Eureka’s — and the state’s — first woman mayor.

And it all happened the day after her daughter graduated from Stanford. “All my life I have worked to see that my daughter graduated from Stanford,” she told a reporter, “and on the very day she was to receive the coveted honors I was unable to be present. Such is the life of a politician.”

Prohibition proved to be one of the controversial issues of her administration. By one 1928 newspaper account, Eureka had more than 50 speakeasies. No wonder, since illegal liquor was easily brought in by rum-runners along the isolated coastline, according to Clifford James Walker’s book “One Eye Closed, the Other Red — the California Bootlegging Years.”

Emily believed Prohibition was a bad idea. “It made liars, cheats, hypocrites and thieves of the American people,” she said years later, “and it laid the foundation of a great many of our societal problems today.”

In her campaign, she stated: “I cannot expect to rigidly enforce liquor enforcement laws” but she also added that bootleggers should not be allowed to “invade our residential districts, and I most certainly will demand that the sale of liquor to minors be stopped at once.”

As mayor she succeeded in closing down several “joints” along First and Second streets, and she also infuriated many. Other political controversies followed. In 1930, a recall effort began — and failed.



Photos of Emily Jones courtesy Humboldt County Historical Society

On June, 17, 1929, she won by a margin of 203 votes to become the city’s — and the state’s — first woman mayor.

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# EMILY

From Page 7

In 1985, the Eureka Heritage Society and Humboldt County Historical Society marked the 100th anniversary of Emily's birth with a joint meeting that was written about in the Humboldt Historian (July-August 1985).

The event included a talk by close friend Ruth Loring, who remembered a time toward the end of Emily's life when she put off an important medical exam at the hospital in order to watch the first moon landing.

Emily, Loring said, "lived from the horse-and-buggy era to the space age, and all of it interested her."

In the last days of her life, Emily gave a televised interview to endorse the establishment of a halfway house a block away from her Victorian family home and Mission Revival duplex.

"Emily never lost interest in helping others, even near the end," Loring said.

# REVIVALS

From Page 3

In the 1920s, to counteract amateurishly poor house designs, a group of architects produced many designs for houses of six principal rooms or fewer. According to the Utah Department of Heritage and Arts, the service included plans and specifications, cost \$5 per room, and influenced home designs from coast to coast.

In the 1930s, the Great Depression put an end to lavish Period Revival home building — but it was lovely while it lasted.

*Research by Bob Libershal contributed to this article.*



The fireplace mantle reflects the Arts and Crafts movement.

# MANTLE: Batchelder flair

From Page 5

The mystery was solved when a local expert identified the tiles as the work of Ernest Batchelder, a star of the Arts and Crafts movement.

According to various online architectural history sites, Batchelder was one of the strongest design personalities in American art-tile production in the 1910s and '20s. He studied at the School of Arts and Crafts in Birmingham, England, and later directed the department of Arts and Crafts at Throop Polytechnic Institute in Pasadena.

In 1909, Batchelder built a kiln and began creating handcrafted tiles. His high-end work went on to become hugely popular around the country.

Batchelder's work has an earthy qual-

ity, and his motto was "no two tiles the same." Favorite themes included flowers, plants, birds and animals, but he occasionally produced storybook scenes, mythical creatures and geometric shapes.

At the height of his popularity, the artist published "Batchelder Tile's 1924 Fireplace Mantel Catalog." In it, he reflects that the fireplace "suggests at once a place of comfort, of cheer, of friends, of books. ... The mantel becomes at once the focal point of interest; one can afford to devote thoughtful attention to its design. It should possess a distinctive character of its own sufficient to assert itself, but should not be unduly conspicuous."

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