
Preservation Progress—Ryland Pool

By Tina Morrill

Ryland Pool is located within Ryland Park, which is bound by First Street, Ryland Park Drive, North San Pedro, and Fox Avenue and located in the Vendome neighborhood. It is oval in shape and about 89 feet long and 68 feet wide. The depth of the pool is approximately two feet with a slope to five feet in the center. A curb projects eighteen inches above the concrete pavement that surrounds the pool, where historic Batchelder tiles are inlaid. Interspersed with the Batchelder tiles there are diamond shaped tiles that are also believed to be historic in nature.

About Ernest Allan Batchelder: He was a leading designer of the American arts and crafts movement. Batchelder's products earned a gold medal at the 1915 San Diego Exposition. One of his last and largest projects was the Hershey Hotel in Hershey, Pennsylvania, built by the famous chocolate manufacturer in 1930, in order to give jobs to many local residents who would otherwise have been unemployed during the Depression. Batchelder tiles were used on the walls, floors and stair risers of a dazzling fountain room. It is believed the "Dutchboy" tiles on Ryland Pool are part of the "Chocolate Shoppe" tile series also used in the *Chocolate Shoppe* in downtown Los Angeles which still stands today.

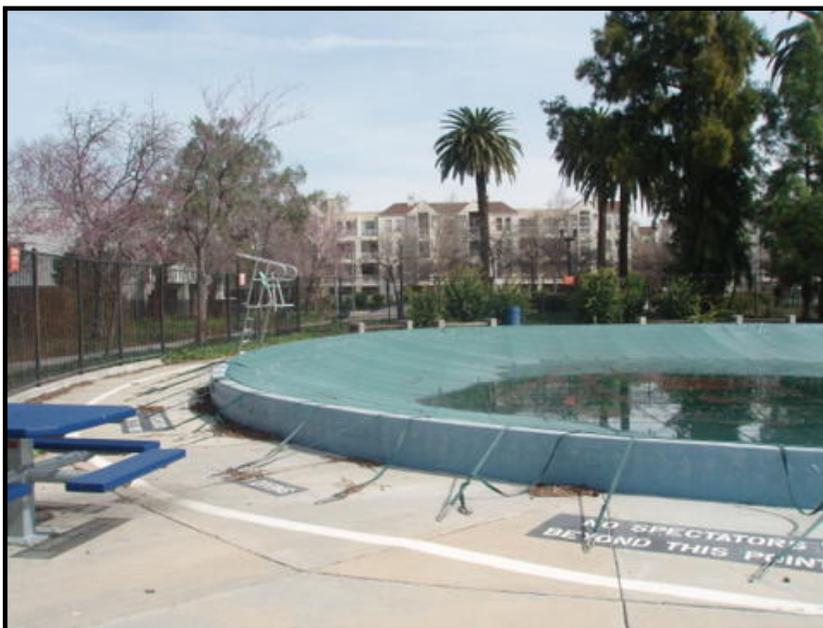
Ryland Pool History: The pool was the project of the Rotary Club of San Jose circa 1926/1927. It was designed and built as a wading pool and as an enhancement to Ryland Park. Many residents and non-residents initially learned to swim in Ryland Pool.

Over the years Ryland Pool underwent minor as well as major changes and upgrades. In November 2007 the City of San Jose Parks and Recreation Dept. proposed a new Master

Aquatics plan. Ryland Pool was not included as one of the pools to be re-opened. There was sufficient public outcry so that the City reconsidered its decision and instead allocated monies to have it brought up to code and reopened with a target opening date of June 2008. A Capital Project Advisory Committee (CPAC) was formed to work with the city, and is comprised of neighbors from the Vendome Neighborhood Association, Northside Neighborhood Association, Historic Hensley District Neighborhood Association and St. James Historic Neighborhood. Considerable amount of time was initially spent convincing the City to bring the Pool up to code to be reopened, and to preserve its historic integrity. A thank you goes to the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission for their recommendations to the City. It both strengthened and aligned with the insistence on historic preservation made by the CPAC.

The pool is now undergoing basic construction and being brought up to code and will open for use on June 23rd. After the 2008 Aquatics Season the historic rehabilitation will begin.

Of particular concern is a blue coating over the tiles and curb and how to remove it without impacting the tiles. The City has agreed to allocate monies for the historic preservation effort, specifically for payment for an Architectural Conservator to provide expertise about the pool's historic preservation and the proper techniques for restoration. In addition, Ryland Pool currently enjoys "candidate city landmark" status, which hopefully will be changed to full city landmark status as part of the historic rehabilitation effort.



Ryland Pool

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SJ Woman's Club Naglee Park Home Tour

The Naglee Park Home Tour, sponsored by the San Jose Woman's Club and PAC*SJ, was held on Saturday, April 26th. The tour included five historic homes in Naglee Park and a tour of the Woman's Club. Refreshments and boutiques were additional attractions. Proceeds will go toward preserving the San Jose Woman's Club Building at 75 South 11th Street. Below left is one of the tour homes designed in 1906 by the prominent Wolfe & McKenzie architects, that belonged to Arthur Holmes, a San Jose auto builder and dealer, and President of the San Jose Hardware Co. Note the 3-car brick garage for his autos, built in 1913. Below right is an interior view of the San Jose Women's Club (City Landmark #32).



Preservation Progress—Ryland Pool (Cont'd)

It has been said that children are one measurement of the success of any public space project. With Ryland Pool rehabilitated and restored as much as it can be to its former state of "whimsical and wonderful" we believe the children of San Jose and surrounding cities will benefit from this great space, and that it will strengthen the family presence which adds vitality to this jewel of a public park.

Join us on June 21st anytime between 12 – 3 p.m. to celebrate the Ryland Pool Grand Re-opening!



Left, blue painted tiles on Ryland Pool.

Right, Image of a Batchelder tile #78, free of blue paint. We believe this is what will be found once the blue substance is removed. To view tiles in color see our newsletter on line.

