

Sculptor Beniamino Bufano at Pebble Beach

by Neal Hotelling



*Bufano's Peace Obelisk at
Timber Cove near
Jenner-by-the Sea*

The Monterey Peninsula made national headlines in the summer of 1942 with a still unsolved beheading – a crime of art to a masterwork created by controversial artist Beniamino Bufano.

The New York Times of July 28, 1942 reported: “Police examined fingerprints on a stainless steel torso of Johan Sebastian Bach today for clues to the whereabouts of its 200-pound, blue-granite head. The head was attached to the fifteen foot torso until Saturday when it disappeared from Devendorf Plaza a few hours before celebration of this art colony’s annual Bach Festival in the Carmel Forest Theater, where it was to have been unveiled [on July 24]. Beniamino Bufano, the sculptor, could offer no clues to police or Federal agents, the latter joining the inquiry because [National Youth Administration] students had aided Mr. Bufano.”

The diminutive, five-foot tall artist was born in San Fele, in southern Italy, and immigrated at a young age with his parents and siblings to New York City. His 1917 WWI Draft Registration gives his birth date as October 14, 1890; his grave at Colma, California shows October 15th. Other sources have wider variances. The 1900 U.S. Census shows he was born in February 1889 and that the family came to America in 1898, while his 1938 Naturalization papers show him as age 40, indicating an 1898 birth, a year commonly used in his biographies. He listed “sculptor” as his occupation on the 1910 census, showing age 21, so he committed early to his favored art form, but experimented with his media.

He first came to California for the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exhibition to work on sculpting details in several of the fair’s features, including the “Panels of Art” at the Palace of Fine Arts. At the exhibition he became fascinated with Chinese glazes and a few years later traveled to China and worked with potters for a few years about 1920 to study and learn their ancient methods. Glazed pottery was his most common medium in the 1920s, sometimes combined with sculpting in stone.

In addition to studying glazes in China, Bufano was befriended by revolutionary leader Sun Yet-sen, who set up a military government at Guangzhu in 1921, placing a young Chiang Kai-Shek as commandant of his National Revolutionary Army. Returning from China, Bufano settled in San Francisco and was briefly an instructor at the San Francisco Institute of Art. Embroiled in controversy for his teaching methods, he was fired after only a few months. Encouraged by his students, he briefly operated his own school, the “Da Vinci School of Allied Arts,” which he set-up in 1923 in the Hawaiian Building built for the 1915 PPIE, but his school soon closed after creditors attached his limited assets. As he said to friends, “I have no money. I know nothing of business. What am I to do?”

A series of exhibitions in San Francisco, New York, Chicago and St. Louis in the mid-1920s resulted in a sale to the Metropolitan Museum and netted enough to afford travels and exhibition in London and Paris. *Continued on page 3*

The next time you drive along 17 Mile Drive near Bird Rock, be sure and take note of our shining historical star, the Casita de Lemos, or Gingerbread House as it is locally known. You may have noticed the colorful new roof painstakingly recreated with the guidance of board member Zigmont "Jody" Le Towt III. Numerous repairs have been made to the exterior of the house. The stucco finish has been restored and will be painted to match the original color once the interior is renovated.

Many of Pedro de Lemos' "mystery building methods" were revealed during renovation. Pedro may have been a painter, printmaker, architect, illustrator, writer, lecturer, Stanford Museum curator and influential theorist... but builder??

The first mystery was encountered after removal of eleven tons of concrete from the roof. Without applying the normal layer of waterproof roofing paper, Pedro nailed chicken wire directly to the roof decking and then applied concrete up to 4" thick. Much of the decking had rotted away. The mystery: what was holding up the roof?

Pedro, or whoever helped him, took a whimsical view of framing. Normal wall framing spaces studs 16" apart. Pedro's studs were spaced 18", 19" or 21" and were randomly made of Douglas fir, pine, redwood, or left over tongue and groove flooring. Areas have recently been completely reframed to meet code.

One wall on the lower level measured 32" longer than the corresponding wall in the kitchen immediately above it. The rotted kitchen floor

collapsed revealing dry rot in supporting beams and an unknown chamber below, thus explaining the difference in measurements. The chamber had been concealed by the kitchen pantry above and the back of a closet on the floor below. The east wall of the kitchen, also badly decayed, was suspended in mid-air, being held up by two large nails at either end. The mystery: what had been holding up the wall, the roof, the north end of the upper level, and the 300 lb refrigerator that had been removed from the kitchen just a month before? A



new bearing wall has been constructed and stairs installed in the discovered chamber.

A laser level revealed that the block wall and northwest corner of the building were 2" lower than the rest of the

room. Crawl space under this floor allowed access to the corner where a large pile of sand was found. The sand was dug out, revealing another mystery: why did Pedro, having run out of concrete before the west and north footings could meet to form the corner, throw a large piece of redwood timber into the void and cover it with sand and complete the final framing above? Concrete has been poured to replace the sand and the floor now rests on the new footing.

This adventure in restoration of a landmark that qualifies for listing in the California and National Registers at the local level of significance has become a major financial commitment for the Conservancy. Once fully renovated, it will provide significant revenue to fund maintenance and conservation of 1,350 acres of open space under Conservancy purview. Find out about open space properties and other projects underway at <http://www.delmonteforestconservancy.org>.

During his two years in Paris, 1927-1929, he sculpted his first St. Francis of Assisi out of a 32-ton block of black Swedish granite. Many years later it was moved to San Francisco.

Back in San Francisco, Bufano embraced creating public art through WPA projects, and dreamed big. In 1935 he announced plans for a 180-foot high St. Francis statue he designed to stand on Twin Peaks, made of a new art medium, stainless steel, with copper face and hands. Bufano created an 8-foot model and with WPA support it eventually gained approval by the Arts Commission, but the controversial statue was defeated by the Parks Commission in 1937, arguing it would be too expensive to maintain.

Bufano's first piece created with stainless steel was a statue of his former friend, Sun Yat-sen, which has stood in San Francisco's Chinatown since 1938. He sculpted the head from granite to go with the stainless steel torso. In 1937, he was already planning a similar statue of Bach – with indications it would be placed somewhere in San Francisco. The growth of the Carmel Bach Festival, begun in 1935, altered the plan.

Bufano's life, including his time on the Peninsula, is shrouded in mystery. When was he here? Where did he work? Biographers reference a studio at Carmel, and later at Big Sur. Did he envision other projects? A recent discovery in the Pebble Beach Company Archives raises more questions. A series of memos and letters from 1944, including three in Bufano's own hand, evidence that Bufano was living and working in Pebble Beach at the former studio of artist Jo Mora—the same year that Mayor Roger Lapham, a founder of Cypress Point Club, appointed Bufano to the San Francisco Arts Commission.

Mora had acquired two lots in 1927, about 4.7 acres along Del Ciervo, on which he built a studio and stables. In November 1942, Mora exchanged those lots for the former Carbery home along Sunridge, near today's Mora Lane. We now know the studio on Del Ciervo was leased to Bufano. Was it there that Bufano worked on his Bach? We don't know when the lease began.

Bufano clearly wanted to stay, but by mid-1944, Morse wanted to upgrade the hillside and a studio no longer fit in the plans. After getting his initial

request to vacate, Bufano met with Morse in early August and followed up with a handwritten note: Dear Mr. Morse, The drawing that you saw in my studio yesterday will make a beautiful monument commemorating world peace or humanity united and I am sure that you saw a great possibility as a peace monument in it and to place it on some beautiful spot on the grounds close to the sea that will give grace and a place in history... I will make the statue for the use of the studio. Very sincerely yours, Beniamino Bufano.

Over the next four months they met and wrote; Bufano looking for every avenue to stay, and Morse reiterating he had to vacate. In November, Bufano delivered a check for \$3,000 to purchase the property. Morse returned the check as he had already made arrangements to sell the sub-divided one-acre lot with the studio to Gladys Johnston for \$4,000. Bufano moved out in early December.

His Bach was re-released with a new ceramic head and exhibited at the Philadelphia Museum from 1956-1965, and later at the United Nations. After returning to California, it was loaned to the Mondavi Vineyard at Oakville for display. While Bufano's time at Pebble Beach did not result in a Peace monument here, he did create others, including those on display at San Francisco and near Jenner-by-the-Sea. 🐉



Reproduced from the magazine "What's Doing," August 1949. (Original source unknown.) Only known photo showing the face of Bach in granite. Here Bufano prepares his Bach for the July 24, 1942 unveiling in Devendorf Park.



"...[Bufano] examines the massive head of Sebastian Bach which, atop a 10-foot stainless steel body, is expected to be placed in Stanford's music building". - San Francisco Library Historic Photo Collection, Photo #AAC-9165; Portraits-Bufano, Beniamino-1955

Life On The Rocks - Pebble Beach's Monumental Offshore Habitat

by Jeffrey B. Froke, Ph.D.

On any day of the year, observant residents and visitors to Pebble Beach may appreciate the rich and abundant sealife that occupies our own Bird and Seal Rocks. Unbeknownst to most watchers, however, is how these and the Cypress, Pescadero and Sunset rocks, and so many others that anonymously dot the Pebble Beach coastline are part of the California Coastal National Monument. Altogether, the monument -- added to the National Conservation Lands by Presidential proclamation in 2000 -- is a collection of nearly 20,000 rocks, islets, exposed reefs and pinnacles, totaling 1,000 acres stretched along our state's 1,000-mile coast from the borders of Mexico and Oregon, and for 12 nautical miles offshore. Held in trust by the federal Bureau of Land Management, the monument hosts a wild interplay of land and sea, providing vital havens for diverse wildlife.

Largest of the PB constituency, Bird Rock and its companion Seal Rock are embraced by seabirds and marine mammals that sail, swim, climb and waddle ashore, whether to breed or just to loaf and warm-up on high ground. Thereon, bird eggs and chicks are safe from the predations of Coyote, Raccoon, Bobcat and Red Fox; yet their parents stay watchful of Peregrine Falcons and Western Gulls. In late summer

and fall, California Sea Lions and Pacific Harbor Seals divvy the rocks vertically: Enabled by their reversible hind limbs, immense sea lions, nature's giddy harumfrodites, scale the highest peaks of Bird Rock, while much smaller seals, whose rear flippers cannot reach forward, haul-out onto the flat lowlands of both Seal and Bird rocks. Sea Otters that rarely come ashore can find refuge amidst the rocks' shallow shoals.

Each year, the majority of birds nesting on the broad slopes of Bird Rock are Brant's Cormorant. Pelagic Cormorant are adept to home-making on shallow shelves and ledges, and nest here in smaller numbers. Brown Pelicans, the cormorants' cousin, arrive in late summer after nesting in Baja California and Channel Islands National Monument, notably San Miguel Island. The local company of nesting birds also includes Pigeon Guillemots and hilariously vocal Black Oystercatchers: "...How they seemed to fill the sea and air with their sweet jargoning" (Coleridge, *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*).

The oceanic rocks of Pebble Beach always are lively and bear watching. Why not take a walk along the footpath near Bird Rock, or stroll to the end of the Stillwater Cove pier and seas the day for yourself?

Bird Rock Pebble Beach

- photo by Jeffrey Froke



Pavilion and Overflow Parking Lot Photos by Don Eastman



As part of Pebble Beach Company's value of "keep improving," a new Arrival Pavilion has been installed on Palmero Way near the tennis court parking lot. The Pavilion is staffed by guest service employees from The Lodge at Pebble Beach during the hours of 6:30 am to 10:30 pm. Their main purpose is to welcome guests and other visitors arriving to The Lodge area, and to provide directions to specific locations, such as The Lodge, Casa Palmero, The Spa, and The Beach & Tennis Club. We also see a number of lost or misdirected vehicles on Palmero Way, both

tourists and occasionally delivery trucks, and the guest service staff will provide directions for such vehicles to reach their correct destinations.

All vehicles are requested to slow down as they approach the Pavilion to be greeted by guest service staff.

Also recently completed by Pebble Beach Company is parking for employees near The Inn at Spanish Bay. The parking lot is located off Congress Road and 17 Mile Drive near the Pacific Grove gate entrance. For further updates on Pebble Beach Company's construction projects, please visit the DMFPO website at <http://www.dmfpo.org>.



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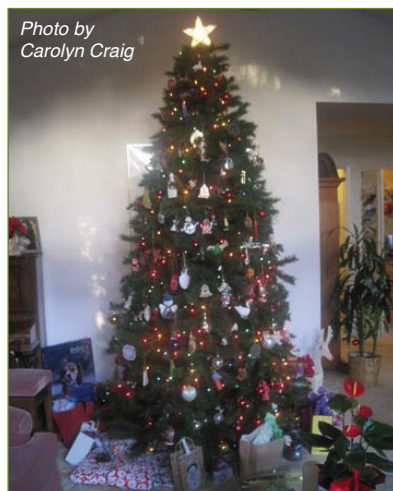
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Knowing Your Neighbors - Pelican, Arrowhead, Chaparral, Colton and Congress Roads

The first Neighborhood Christmas Party was in 1973 at Jeff and Carolyn Craig's home. They invited the whole neighborhood because they wanted to know their neighbors! It continues today with different hosts each year. Last year's party was held at the home of Chuck and Anne Perry.



by Carolyn Craig

Photo by Rick Verbanec



When Averil Nero and Sandi Verbanec moved into the neighborhood, they decided that the Christmas party was so much fun that it should be expanded. The neighborhood participated in dinners at restaurants and an annual birthday party for the ladies, with all celebrating on the same day. The photo above was this year at the Beach Club. What a fun neighborhood!

Central Coast Visiting Nurses Association & Hospice *Flu Shot Clinics Open to the Public*

Hosted by DMFPO at the Pebble Beach Community Services District
Forest Lake and Lopez Roads, Pebble Beach



**Dates: Thursday, October 17, 2013
Thursday, October 24, 2013
Time: 10:00 a.m. – Noon**



Immunizations available to ages 2 and above

- \$30: Flu Shot, FluMist & High Dose (over age 65)
 - Medicare Plan B
 - Blue Cross & Blue Shield Insurance
- *Must present insurance card at clinic**

Other vaccines available:

- Tdap (tetanus/whooping cough) - \$70
- Pneumonia (over age 50) – price varies

office@dmfpo.org http://www.dmfpo.org (831) 373-1618

**The next Semiannual
Membership Meeting is
Sunday, November 10 from
2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at The Inn at
Spanish Bay. Mark Stilwell of
Pebble Beach Company will be
the featured speaker.**

3101 Forest Lake Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953

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