

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

**HISTORIC SIGNIFIGANCE REPORT**

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# 506 Brinkerhoff Avenue

Santa Barbara, CA



*Figure 1* 506 Brinkerhoff Avenue from: Herics, Sebastian, 25 March 2021.

**Designation Status:** Structure of Merit. Brinkerhoff Avenue Historic District contributor.

**Assessor Parcel Number:** 037-163-014

**Constructed:** c. 1880s-1920s

**Historic Name:** None

**Architect:** Unknown

**Builder:** Unknown

**Architectural Style:** Folk Victorian

**Property Type:** Mahakankala Buddhist Center

**Original Use:** Residential

**What makes this place historic?**

506 Brinkerhoff is historic because it exemplifies Folk Victorian style, while also contributing to the Brinkerhoff Avenue Historic District.

Although known for much of the intricate detailing of the Queen Anne style, the Victorian Era was also home to simpler styles such as the Folk Victorian. With the combination of bold massing forms and detailed porch work, the Folk Victorian embodies a transitional style that hints at the simpler styles to come, while staying connected to the current styles of the day (Grumbine).

As American Colonial Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival styles looked to the past for inspiration, so too the Folk Victorian looked to its roots, which were the simple, National Folk structures, to base its forms. These forms were then built upon with moldings and pre-cut details available from more current Victorian styles. Sometimes, older folk houses were simply updated with newer elements, including whole porches (Grumbine).



*Figure 2* 506 Brinkerhoff Avenue from the side from: Herics, Sebastian, 25 March 2021.

Taking a long look at 506 and 508 Brinkerhoff Avenue, we can find a National Folk form translated for Victorian tastes. The home seems to be about two rooms wide, and two rooms deep, making it a massed-plan home. Massed-plan homes were first constructed out of rough hewn logs by some of the first American colonists in New England in the 1600s and 1700s. With the coming of the railroad and



Figure 3 The decorative brackets that indicate a Victorian taste from: Herics, Sebastian, 25 March 2021.

new production techniques in the 1800s, builders had access to lumbered and machine-cut wood for construction (McAlester, 144). Specifically, pre-cut detailing—like brackets and spindework—could be bought and simply added to the home to the taste of the owner (McAlester, 398). So 506 Brinkerhoff has massing that is nearly 400 years old, but with the fashionable architectural tastes of the nineteenth century, made possible by the technological development of the railroad and wood working machinery.

The National Style motifs are prevalent in the thick cornice and corner pilasters, referring to ancient Greek and Roman temples of the Mediterranean. The wood shiplap siding and moderately pitched roof also indicate a National Style influence. However, the Victorian taste can be found when we note the partial wrap-around porch, and the chamfered bracketed porch posts and balustrade that give detail, depth, and shadow to the building.

The National Folk form, decorated with Victorian details, make this home an example of Folk Victorian architecture. As such, the home contributes to the Brinkerhoff Avenue Historic District.

The Brinkerhoff Historic District represent Santa Barbara in transition between the late 1800s and early 1900s. With the promise of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the completion of Sterns Warf in the mid to late 19th century, land prices in Santa Barbara began to skyrocket. Because of this, many streets west of Lower State Street such Chapala, De La Vina, and Bath saw large scale development. It was during this time that Brinkerhoff Avenue also began a twenty year period of development. Less than three blocks away from State Street, Brinkerhoff Avenue had easy access to the Warf, the train station, and the trolley line that ran the course of Santa Barbara's downtown neighborhood.

The District reflects the growth of Santa Barbara's residential neighborhood from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. With the promise of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the completion of Sterns Warf in the mid to late 19th century, land prices in Santa Barbara began to skyrocket. Because of this, many streets west of Lower State Street such

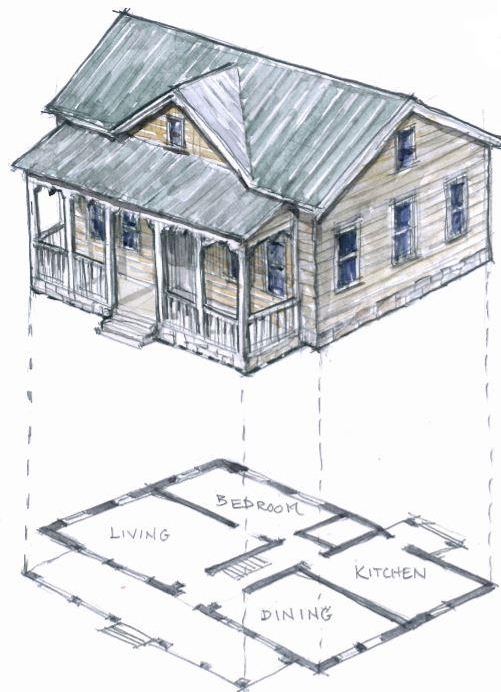


Figure 4 A classic example of a Folk Victorian home from: Grumbine.

Chapala, De La Vina, and Bath saw large scale development. It was during this time that Brinkerhoff Avenue also began a twenty year period of development. Less than three blocks away from State Street, Brinkerhoff Avenue had easy access to the Wharf, the train station, and the trolley line that ran the course of Santa Barbara's downtown neighborhood ("Brinkerhoff").

While much of the growth around the downtown area during the 1880-1920 period was built with the expressed purpose of temporarily accommodating the nation's vacationing elites, Brinkerhoff Avenue is noted for its attempt to house the growing permanent population of service industry workers. Henry Tallant is credited with kick starting development on Brinkerhoff Avenue in 1886 by purchasing the unimproved block and subdividing it into eighteen separate lots. By 1900, 11 of the 18 lots on Brinkerhoff Avenue were developed, three homes were added between 1901-1906, two between 1907-1909, and three bungalows were finally added in 1913 ("Brinkerhoff").

While not the only residential neighborhood of the time, Brinkerhoff Avenue stands out as one of the most well preserved. The range of styles present on Brinkerhoff Avenue exemplifies its broad period of development, with styles including Queen Anne, Italianate, Stick, Craftsman, Folk Victorian, and Colonial Revival. The neighborhood also maintains its original sandstone curbing, and many of the original buildings remain unaltered. Since the mid-1960s, the neighborhood has seen commercial businesses rehabilitate what were once single family homes; all the while maintaining the charm and history that makes Brinkerhoff Avenue a Historic District ("Brinkerhoff").

#### **Property Description:**

The home has a massed-floor plan, about two rooms wide and two rooms deep, with an addition to the rear of a side entrance door. Hipped roof with front gable with a centered brick chimney and a hipped partial wrap-around porch. Corner pilasters support a plain cornice and frieze. Chamfered balustrade and chamfered porch posts with decorative brackets. Front façade windows are double hung one-over-one wood sash windows with ogee lugs. The front door has a simple plain frame and has 5 horizontal panes. The home is covered by vertical wood shiplap siding.

#### **Historic Integrity:**

"Integrity" is how well a historic place or resource represents the period or theme for which it is being recognized for. To prove "Integrity," researchers use the National Register of Historic Place's definition of "Integrity." For the National Register, Integrity is determined by the historic resource's Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association (Integrity, 44). 506-508 Brinkerhoff maintains its integrity because it successfully conveys its original 1880s-1910s appearance.

#### **Historical Significance:**

"Historical Significance" is a term used by the city to call a place historical. A place earns "Historical Significance" if it meets one or all of the criteria listed below in the City of Santa Barbara. The Landmarks Commission and City Council decides whether or not, based on these criteria, if a historical place is a Historic Landmark or a Structure of Merit (Chapter 22.22). This building was designated a **Structure of Merit**, because it:

**Meets Criterion A.** *Its character, interest, or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State, or the Nation.*

506 Brinkerhoff Avenue is historic because it embodies the Folk Victorian architectural style, making it a significant part of the heritage of Santa Barbara in the Brinkerhoff Avenue Historic District.



Figure 5 The Brinkerhoff Avenue Historic District from: "Brinkerhoff Avenue Landmark District."

The Historic District centered around Brinkerhoff Avenue is reflective of the growth of residential neighborhoods in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Originally owned by its namesake, Dr. Samuel Brinkerhoff Avenue, the block was purchased by Henry Tallant in 1886, and subsequently subdivided and developed over the next 20 years as low-density single-family dwellings. With a period of significance ranging from 1886-1913, the district is a turn of the century architectural catalogue, which maintains prime examples of Colonial Revival, National Folk, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Craftsman styles. While originally the street was exclusively residential, in the late 1960's it began to attract a variety of commercial interests who were drawn by the close proximity to State Street. Today, this landmark district retains its original beauty, and is home to an eclectic collection of single-family homes, boutiques, galleries, and even a veterinary office ("Brinkerhoff").

~~Meets Criterion B.~~ *Its location as a site of significant historic event.*

~~Meets Criterion C.~~ *Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City, the State and the Nation.*

**Meets Criterion D.** *Its exemplification of a particular architectural style or ways of life important to the City, the State, or the Nation.*

506 Brinkerhoff Avenue exemplifies Victorian Folk style because of its:

- Massed-plan floorplan
- Hipped front-gabled roof
- Plain cornice and frieze supported by plain pilasters
- Shiplap wood siding
- Double-hung one-over-one wood sash windows with ogee lugs
- Chamfered porch posts with decorative brackets and chamfered balustrade

~~Meets Criterion E.~~ *Its exemplification of the best remaining architectural type in a neighborhood.*

~~Meets Criterion F.~~ *Its identification as the creation, design, or work of a person or persons whose effort significantly influenced the heritage of the City, State, or the Nation.*

~~Meets Criterion G.~~ *Its embodiment of elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.*

~~Meets Criterion H.~~ *Its relationship to any other landmark if its preservation is essential to the integrity of that landmark.*

~~Meets Criterion I.~~ *Its unique location or singular characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood.*

~~Meets Criterion J.~~ *Its potential of yielding significant information of archaeological interest.*

~~Meets Criterion K.~~ *Its integrity as a natural environment that strongly contributes to the well-being of the people of the City, the State or the Nation.*

### Works Cited

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