

CACHE

The Center for Art  
Culture & History  
EXETER

THE  
Exchange

APRIL 2023

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Open Fridays 1:30-4 p.m. Saturdays 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Sundays Noon - 4 p.m.



## MEET OUR BOARD: Artist, craftsman serve on CACHE Board of Directors



*LEFT: Mural artist Kelsey Gilles of Exeter, notable for her collaboration with fellow mural artist Colleen Mitchell-Veyna, brings her artistic sensibilities and training to her volunteer work as a CACHE board member. RIGHT: Contractor Jim Tyler of Exeter offers the CACHE board a range of important professional expertise.*

(PHOTOS: Submitted)

For some pieces, she likes to use found objects as part of the composition.

“The most meaningful thing to me is to create art that the everyday person can enjoy. Art should be accessible to all people of the community,” Kelsey said. She also enjoys teaching children in private art lessons where she can help grow their talents in a comfortable environment. “As an artist, it is important to spread and share the joy of the arts with our surrounding community,” she said.

**CACHE BOARD MEMBER JIM TYLER** is a Valley native and local contractor returning from prior service on the CACHE Board. Jim and his “very patient” wife, Sarah, are proud of their two adult children who both graduated from EUHS. Their daughter made a big life change with a move to Sweden a couple years ago, and their son is on the fast track as a manager with FedEx.

Jim has a long record of community involvement with Sarah, who formerly served on staff at the Exeter Chamber of Commerce. In 2018, Jim and Sarah began an art studio at his shop as a way to encourage community members to engage in working with their hands to produce art instead of spending time on computer and phone screens.

Jim’s interest in art began when he saw a Van Gogh for the first time. “I was struck by the passion in those brush strokes and that fueled my continuing passion for art,” Jim said.

He says that as a contractor, he is proud of all the remodels, additions, and new builds in the Exeter area that will outlive him. His hobbies always revolve around creating: painting, woodworking, landscaping and building. And that includes the community and institution building he is engaged in as a key member of the CACHE Board of Directors.

CACHE is governed by a volunteer nonprofit Board of Directors that is established according to its bylaws. Reflecting our ongoing desire to create transparent and accountable governance, The Exchange regularly brings you profiles of those hardworking board members who are seeking to bring quality programming and professional oversight to our organization, community, and region. This month’s focus is on members Kelsey Gilles and Jim Tyler, two board members whose dedication and expertise are helping CACHE become a major player in the region’s arts and culture sector.

**CACHE BOARD MEMBER KELSEY GILLES** works as a mural artist based in Exeter, California since 2014. Throughout her early life Kelsey was always creating art and wanted to work in the arts. She began mural painting journey by assisting Colleen Mitchell-Veyna on the Exeter Emperor Grapes mural.

She graduated from California State University, Los Angeles in 2018 with a Bachelor of Studio Arts degree. While attending university she worked on murals during school breaks. Kelsey has completed murals throughout the San Joaquin Valley of California. Today, Kelsey and Mitchell-Veyna are equal mural partners currently working under the name CK Mural Team of Exeter and Tulare. CK Mural Team continues to create throughout the Central Valley and beyond.

For commissioned murals, traditional realism is their work style. However, Kelsey’s personal artwork is stylized brightly-colored contemporary art. During her time at university, she was able to fully explore this style via large-scale works, participating in every gallery show that was held on campus.

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A newsletter on  
the Art, Culture,  
and History  
of California’s  
Heartland

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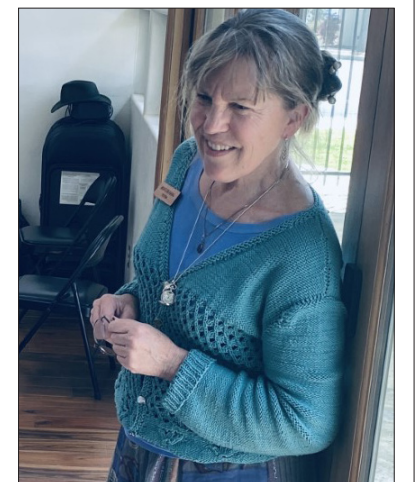
THE  
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## South Valley Art Tour brings artists, admirers to CACHE



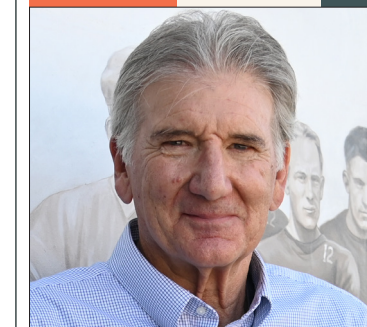
*LEFT: Krista Fulbright visits with fellow artist Chuck Prudhomme at the South Valley Art Tour (SVAT) where both offered a painting demonstration, and former Exeterite Prudhomme generously offered his finished piece for raffle to benefit CACHE. RIGHT: “Locals” artist Jana Botkin attends CACHE’s recent stint on the SVAT.*



(EXETER, CA) - The Arts Consortium’s annual South Valley Art Tour (SVAT) came to The Center for Art, Culture, and History-Exeter (CACHE) recently for its alternating biannual “south of 198” installment the weekend of March 25-26. The tour has become Tulare County’s widest-reaching art event of the year.

Traditionally the event invited artgoers to art studios. But in recent years, the SVAT has expanded to include public art exhibition spaces such as CACHE. For its part of the program, CACHE featured artist demonstrations, including one by former Exeter resident and current Northern California artist Chuck Prudhomme, who generously offered his piece for raffle to benefit CACHE.

As in years past, this year’s event featured numerous artists studios, with this year’s itinerary focusing on artists from Porterville, Springville, Tulare, Exeter, and Visalia—nationally recognized as well as aspiring greats. Artists invited attendees into their personal workspaces for a behind-the-scenes look at their artistic practices, offering visitors a chance to get to know the faces and places behind Tulare County’s corner of the art world. “The event offered our community the chance to broaden its art horizons and make personal connections with the many creative minds who are shaping the cultural life of our community,” said CACHE President Dwight Miller. •



*A Word  
from our  
PRESIDENT*  
DWIGHT MILLER

**Dear CACHE supporters,**

I hope this message finds you all well. It is my pleasure to share with you the joy and excitement that filled the air during our recent events. On March 26th, we hosted a reception that drew a large crowd of art enthusiasts from near and far. It was a pleasure to see so many people come together to celebrate the beauty and creativity that our community has to offer. In addition to the reception, we also participated in the South Valley Art Tour, which brought even more art lovers to our gallery. The turnout was fantastic, and it was truly inspiring to see so many people engage with and appreciate the works of

*Continues on next page*

## CACHE draws from Exeter Cemetery District's stories of our past

*Exeter's past citizens reside in the three cemeteries of the Exeter Public Cemetery District. The team at CACHE wants to honor and protect all those gravesites holding their stories.*

And they accumulate their historical narrative at an unrelentingly consistent clip, aggregating steadily over time into a trove of invaluable historical importance. Because of that significance, The Exchange is presenting this first of a series of articles intended to tell the stories of the Exeter Public Cemetery District (EPCD) cemeteries: Exeter; Deep Creek; and Hamilton.

In 2022, the EPCD Board of Directors twice asked district voters via Measure U to increase property taxes to support the three cemeteries' ongoing maintenance. Both measures failed to gain the two-thirds majority vote needed for passage. Those campaigns revealed considerable misconceptions about the district.

Cemeteries have a long and complex history in the United States, and in California in particular. The practice of burying the dead in designated spaces dates back to ancient times, and it has continued to evolve throughout history.

In the early days of the United States, cemeteries were often located on the outskirts of towns and cities. They were often small, informal spaces, marked by simple grave markers or wooden crosses. These early cemeteries were often used by families and communities to bury their loved ones, and they were rarely subject to any formal regulations or oversight.

As towns and cities grew, however, so too did the need for larger, more formal cemeteries. By the mid-19th century, cemeteries were becoming more common in urban areas and they were often designed as public parks, complete with walking paths, ornate landscaping, and grand mausoleums.

California's cemeteries reflect the state's unique blend of cultures and traditions. The Spanish brought Catholicism to 18th century California and Catholic cemeteries were established primarily in the southern and coastal parts of the state. As California became more diverse and multicultural, other religious and cultural groups established their own cemeteries, including Jewish, Chinese, and Japanese communities.

During the early 20th century, cemeteries in California and elsewhere became more standardized and regulated.



*ABOVE: Time slowly erases some details such as on this Exeter District Cemetery tombstone, but cemeteries remain excellent sources of historical information, if sometimes only hinting at profound life stories like that of four-year-old Bessie A. Harris who was laid to rest in 1924. The inscription reads only: Our Baby.*

Governments began to regulate cemetery design, construction, and maintenance, and cemetery management became professionalized. In 1909, the state legislature passed the first law establishing public cemetery districts. Additional laws in 1921 and 1927 were followed by a 1939 law placing California's cemeteries under jurisdiction of the Health and Safety Code. Exeter's Senator Frank Mixer authored that law which lasted until 2004 when a two-year effort by legislators and cemetery leaders crafted an updated version.

Today, cemeteries in California and throughout the United States continue to evolve, reflecting changing attitudes towards death and mourning, as well as advances in technology and environmental concerns. Some cemeteries now offer eco-friendly burial options, for example, while others have embraced digital technology to help families find and connect with their loved ones. Overall, the story of cemeteries in the United States and California is one of evolution and adaptation, reflecting changing cultural, social, and technological contexts over time. •

**NEXT ISSUE of THE EXCHANGE:**  
*Part 2: Exeter District Cemetery's Beginning:*

## 'LOCALS' exhibition continues focus on 'Exeter artists' through end of April



*FROM LEFT, CLOCKWISE: Leaves in Water, by Nadi Spencer, currently on view in Locals. ABOVE LEFT: Former CACHE curator Anna Nelson mingles with reception attendees at the opening for Locals, a celebration of local artists near and far. BELOW: Opening attendees admire the art work on exhibition in Locals, through April. (PHOTOS: Dwight Miller)*



*A Word from our President, continued from previous page*

our talented artists.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge the recent trauma that our community has experienced due to the flooding in the Tulare County area and beyond. We know that many of our neighbors have been affected by this disaster, and our thoughts are with them during this challenging time. We remain committed to supporting our community through our work at CACHE, and we will continue to do everything we can to uplift and celebrate the rich culture and history of our area. Thank you to all of our "Friends of CACHE": our artists; volunteer docents; Hometown Emporium for the reception food, Mark Ferguson sharing his lovely wines from the

Ferguson Family Winery; Aaron Collins for all his amazing help with the Exchange and our efforts to re-brand ourselves; and finally Donna Alfaro, our administrative assistant and our volunteer board. Your passion and dedication make CACHE such a special place, and we look forward to continuing to work together to foster a vibrant and thriving arts community.

Warmest regards,

**Dwight Miller**

*President*

*The Center for Art, Culture and History-Exeter (CACHE)*



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