

New Orleans Brick & Stone Carries A. Hays Town's Salvage Legacy Into Its Fourth Decade

A family business whose founder was mentored by A. Hays Town supplies period brick and salvaged slate for restoration work across the Gulf South.

NEW ORLEANS, LA, UNITED STATES, October 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Most of the brick that gives New Orleans its character cannot be bought new. The soft, hand formed common brick running through the French Quarter, the Garden District, Uptown and the Marigny came out of local kilns more than a century ago, at sizes modern production no longer makes. So when a wall fails, when an addition goes up, or when weather takes a section of parapet, the repair either disappears into the original or it announces itself for the next fifty years. New Orleans Brick & Stone has spent nearly forty years making sure it disappears.

The family traces its approach to A. Hays Town, the Louisiana architect who was among the first in the region to build with salvaged materials, and whose use of them became a hallmark of Southern residential design. Town was among the first architects in the region to build seriously with reclaimed brick, cypress and stone, and he foraged for much of it himself in New Orleans. One of his buildings used 225,000 bricks pulled from a demolished administration building, laid alongside cypress flooring taken from an early New Orleans convent and French slate that had arrived in the port as ballast in sailing ships. Town mentored Debbie Bourgeois, who founded the company with her husband Timothy. They named their daughter Hays after him, and she runs the business today with her brother Ben.

That inheritance is the whole operating principle. The company works as a [reclaimed brick supplier](#) to architects, builders, masonry contractors and homeowners, holding four house blends in stock rather than ordering against a project. Soft Reds and New Orleans Hard Tans account for most of what leaves the yard for the metro, going into repairs, additions and garden walls that have to vanish into the original fabric. Where much of the trade quotes six to twelve month lead times, material here sits on pallets and goes out within 48 hours of a paid invoice.

Matching is the core of the work, and it comes down to four things: size, colour range, texture, and mortar. A clear photograph taken in daylight with a coin or a tape measure in the frame is usually enough to start, though a loose brick is better. Candidates are pulled against the actual material rather than a catalogue, and physical samples ship within about two business days, free to the trade, because brick colour lies in photographs and the only honest test is holding the real thing against the real wall. Once a blend is chosen the quantity is confirmed and reserved

against the project.

The part most often got wrong is the mortar, and it is where [historic brick restoration](#) quietly goes wrong years after the scaffolding comes down. Pre 1900 brick is smaller, softer and more irregular than modern modular brick, and it was laid in lime mortar for a reason. Mortar is meant to be the sacrificial element, letting moisture move out through the joint. A hard, Portland rich cement mortar traps that moisture and forces it out through the face of the brick instead, which spalls it. The right brick in the wrong mortar does visible damage to the thing it was meant to preserve, so written mortar and jointing recommendations go out with the order.

The same logic governs roofing. A slate roof does not fail all at once, it fails in patches, and the only repair that disappears is a slate of the same quarry, colour, size and thickness. The company holds salvaged Vermont, Welsh and Pennsylvania slate, commonly 18 by 10 inches through 24 by 14, sorted to an existing roof rather than sold off the nearest pallet. Everything is ring tested before it ships and delaminating stock stays in the yard. Those looking for [reclaimed roof tiles in New Orleans](#) can buy by the square for a full scope or by the piece for a patch. The company supplies material rather than labour, and hands larger restoration scopes to a dedicated reclaimed roofing and slate operation within the same family of businesses.

Representative work is smaller than people expect. A few hundred brick to close up an opening in a soft historic wall is normal. So is a few dozen slates to make a dormer right. So is tracking down a single missing coping, sill, quoin or threshold through a salvage network that runs from demolition contractors across the Gulf South and Midwest to reclamation yards in England and France. For projects inside historic districts, material descriptions, source period and photographs of the reserved stock are supplied in a form that can be put in front of a review board.

New Orleans Brick & Stone is a family run supplier of reclaimed brick, stone, flagstone, pavers and roofing slate, with yards in New Orleans and in Dallas and Fort Worth, shipping nationwide. Its work has been featured in Dallas Style & Design.

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Unlimited Content

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