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THE JEWEL
OF THE MISSIONS
SPRING 2007 - VOL. IV, NO. 2

Return of the Swallows Celebration

Mission San Juan Capistrano marked its annual Return of the Swallows to Capistrano on St. Joseph’s Day. March 18th & 19th with fanfare, celebration, tradition, and history!

Entertainment was a highlight of the two day festival that included performances by Mission Parish School students, Aztec dancers, mariachis, a solo of Leon Rene’s famed song “When the Swallows Came Back to Capistrano” sung by local recording artist Renee L.A. and a concert by Sajana, station tours by the Mission’s docents, Living History characters, and more.

The festivities celebrated the successful installation of the Mission Basilica’s Grand Retablo, a 14 month in the making - $2 million altar piece, hand made in Spain specifically for the Mission. "We knew it would be close, but we made our deadline of having the retable in place for this most significant time in our Mission calendar" noted the Very Reverend Arthur A. Holquin, Rector/ Pastor of Mission Basilica.

At the Mission’s annual St. Joseph’s Day press conference held on Monday, March 19th, visitors were warmly greeted by such notable speakers as Mission Preservation Foundation President, Anthony Moiso who urged support and investment in the preservation of Orange County’s only mission. The press conference ended on a celebratory note when Executive Director, Mechelle Lawrence made a surprise announcement that Mrs. Erma Jean Tracy and her family through their family foundation was giving $270,000 toward the conservation of the Serra Chapel and its paintings, on behalf of her late husband, Tom Tracy.

See story on page 3.
People are always on the quest to find that latest new thing, gadget or fad. I admit, I am guilty of wanting the latest handbag, home furnishings, and travel experience. Interestingly enough, these “new trends” often recycle specific elements of the past. The bell bottom pants that your mother swore off in the 1970s show up as your boot leg jeans today. The new home you just purchased takes its architectural elements from the historic mission, through its clay roof tiles, arches, and stucco finishes. However, even in the context of a constantly changing society, “there are some things that never go out of style.” Mission San Juan Capistrano is an example of this.

The values of “time well spent with family,” “love of country,” “getting a “great deal,” and experiencing a much needed moment of peace and quiet reflection have always been part of the American psyche.

In fact, I believe that the Mission will continue to become more relevant to all of us. Consider this: most of our Orange County children will visit this mission during the fourth grade. If we provide a quality learning environment, in this setting of incompa-

rable beauty and history, these students’ field visits will not be their last.

My sense is that the Mission is becoming more relevant is reinforced by the dramatic growth in our Mission Preservation Society’s membership. The Mission’s membership has climbed from 417 members during 2003 to over 2,000 active applications today. Each of these engaged individuals, families, and companies, are making a choice to support the Mission through financial investment.

I believe that we, as a collection of diverse people, want and desire - the opportunity to view the past while living in the ever changing present. Mission San Juan Capistrano is the ultimate California, its span of 230 years as a constantly evolving historic site becomes more critical to us as we experience greater pressures to multi task, achieve, and produce. The San Juan Capistrano Mission is indeed relevant in the era of i-Pods, You Tube, and Traffic because some things never go out of style, like Mission San Juan Capistrano, Orange County’s only mission.

See you on the path.

Michelle Lawrence
Executive Director
In January of this year, conservation work was initiated to reveal the decorative wall paintings in the suite of rooms known as the Padres’ Quarters. White overpaint had been removed from above an abraded, yet intact scheme, consisting of a dark gray “dado,” topped by a frieze of floral and wave motifs in red and black, painted on a pale yellow background. Dating probably to the time of the wall paintings of the Serra Chapel, about three decades ago, the paintings had been lost to both view and memory until work commenced this year.

The paintings were rediscovered when the conservation team made a careful investigation of the stratigraphy of many layers of limewash and modern paint finishes that have built up on the walls over the last century. The conservators also discovered that these lost paintings had in turn been painted over an earlier wall decoration, most likely dating to the 1920s restoration period at the Mission.

The conservation team is headed by Debra May and Rachel Burch, of May Painting Conservation, Los Angeles, who specialize in wall painting and easel painting conservation. The work was carried out alongside team members Alice Paterakis, Witold Wojcik, and Lorraine Hajjar.

In December of 2006, Mission San Juan Capistrano retained the services of Architectural Resources Group (ARG) to conduct an investigation of the moisture problems in the Gift Shop, a historic brick building dating from circa 1800 and originally serving as the priests’ reception room or sala. The results of ARG’s fieldwork and analysis indicate active signs of moisture infiltration from rising damp, including erosion of masonry and finishes, particularly on the building’s east wall.

Given these conditions, ARG recommended a phased approach, using a combination of immediate actions and overall site observations and studies. The first phase of the project began in March of 2007, when a group of conservators from ARG joined the Mission Preservation Team to carry out conservation treatments, among them: cleaning the soiled plaster, removing the cement repairs, repointing the brick masonry with a lime mortar, removing the biological growth, chemically consolidating the carved stone details, correcting the west arcade pavement (to establish positive drainage away from the building), plastering, and limewashing.

Future work includes installing a low-profile gutter system on the east side to direct rainwater away from the building; repairing and waterproofing the fountain in the Sacred Garden; and mapping the drainage systems to understand where surface water is being directed. Ultimately, these studies and repairs will help to protect and preserve the existing form, integrity, and materials of the building housing the Gift Shop, one of Mission San Juan Capistrano’s significant historic resources.

**Preservation News from the Mission**

### Padres’ Quarters Undergo Conservation

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**Mission Gift Shop Conservation Begins**

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Mission Volunteer Publishes Book

Dr. Mozelle Sukut, a member of the Mission San Juan Capistrano's Artifacts Council, has compiled a new book, “The Chronicles of California’s Queen Calafia.” The book is based on Garci Rodriguez de Montalvo’s 1587 tale “The Adventures of Ispandian.” Many historians believe California was named for Calafia.

For more information, visit missionsjc.com and click on Benefit Gala Concert and Dinner. To receive an email invite, please call Barb Beier, (949) 234-1323.

New “Kiicha” for Mission’s Native Village Area

Members of the Mission San Juan Capistrano Docent Society, in conjunction with volunteers from the Mission’s garden club, the Gardening Angels, and the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Ajachemen Nation under the leadership of tribal chairman Anthony Rivera, together rebuilt the Mission’s “Kiicha” or Indian hut.

George O’Connell, of O’Connell Landscape Maintenance sponsored the project. The kiicha is a prominent feature of the Mission’s front courtyard and demonstrates the lifestyle of the Juaneño Indians, once Orange County’s sole residents, before the coming of the Spanish. The kiicha consists of a willow branch frame covered with tule leaves (tall grass). It served as a temporary dwelling place for the Juaneños, who spent much of their lives on the move in search of food.

BECOME A MISSION VOLUNTEER

Volunteers play a vital role in preserving the Mission’s heritage and sharing it with others. There are five volunteer groups at the Mission each in need of additional volunteers. The groups include:

Artifacts Council - The Council helps with the creation of exhibits, guest lecture series, and museum development. Pat March, 949-234-1322.


Women’s Guild - The Guild raises funds and enjoys social occasions that benefit preservation. Pat March, 949-234-1322.

Mission Youth Leaders - 7th and 8th grade students with good citizenship grades may become a youth leader and help to support Mission sponsored special events Enrollment fee $15. Pat March, 949-234-1322.

Irene Francisco Distributes Passport Explorers to Visiting Students

Irene Francisco, widow of the Mission’s former Director of Archaeology Harry Francisco, distributed “Passport Explorers” to students of Golden Hill Elementary School in Fullerton. The Passport Explorer is a children’s booklet produced by Alphahouse Publishing which features a walking map, interesting historical facts and games that teach about Mission history. The Passports honor the memory of “Harry the Historian” Francisco, who died in 2006.

For more than 20 years Mrs. Francisco’s late husband, Harry Francisco, volunteered his time participating in excavations on the Mission grounds which revealed much about its early structures. He also performed photographic documentation of the Mission’s grounds and artifacts. The Passports may be purchased at the Mission’s front gate for $2, which covers the cost of producing the Passport. The Passport includes a pencil, lanyard and plastic cover.

“El Viaje de Portola” continued from page 3

gather to honor their compadre riders who have passed. Following the Empty Saddles ceremony, began their “send off” with a special ceremony at the Amantes Camp. This year’s ride honored former Mayor of Palm Springs, 97-year-old Frank Bogert. El Viaje de Portola has long had a special relationship with Mission San Juan Capistrano and has been instrumental in raising funds to benefit the Mission’s preservation. In 2006 Riders donated $50,000 to the Serra Chapel Conservation Project and once again, in 2007 El Viaje de Portola provided a generous gift of $10,000 toward the Serra Chapel project, helping the capital campaign toward its $1.5 million dollar goal. The Mission Preservation Foundation appreciates and supports the Foundation’s efforts.

“Irene Francisco, widow of Mission Director of Archaeology Harry Francisco, distributes Passport Explorers to students of Golden Hill Elementary School, Fullerton.”

Faces of the Present Photo Exhibit Debut

Mission San Juan Capistrano debuted its “Faces of the Present” exhibition of historic photographs in the Rancho room. The photographs were submitted by individuals who had visited the Mission over the years with their families and friends. The exhibition opened on Swallows Day, March 19, 2007, and will run thru June 25, 2007.

One of the featured photographs was submitted by Florence “Flip” Winkler, who came to the Mission as a three-year-old girl with her family in 1925. She was honored at the Swallows Day press conference. Viewing the exhibition is included in the price of a paid admission; admission is free to members of the Mission Preservation Society.

“Romance at the Mission”- September 14 Gala to Feature Tenor Vittorio Grigolo

Mission San Juan Capistrano presents its annual “Romance at the Mission” benefit gala on Friday, September 14, 2007 featuring a performance by classically trained Italian tenor Vittorio Grigolo. Endorsed by Pavarotti as a potential heir, Grigolo was born in Areezo, Italy, in 1977. For more information, visit www.missionsjc.com and click on Benefit Gala Concert and Dinner. To receive an invitation, please call Pat March, 949-234-1322. Traditional jewelers, will again donate items for an Opportunity Drawing. To join The Ritz-Carleton, Laguna Niguel, Sunwest, and Pacific Mercantile banks in underwriting the evening, please contact Barb Beier, 949-234-1323.

SAVE THE DATE
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Mission San Juan Capistrano Volunteer & Staff Update

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Free Mission Pass Offered with Mission Cookbook Purchased During April & May

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Mission Preservation Foundation

The following individuals lend time, talent, and financial support in serving as foundation board members.

President Anthony R. Moiso Rancho Mission Viejo

Secretary/Treasurer William Cventres National Retirement Partners, Inc.

Wylie A. Aitken, Esq. Aitken, Aitken & Cohn

Arthur B. Birtcher Birtcher Anderson Properties

Michael Hagan (ret.) Furen Corporation

Very Reverend Arthur A. Holquin Rector/Pastor Mission Basilica San Juan Capistrano

Robert McDonough Select Remedies Lemon Service

Anne Marie Moiso Leonard Rancho Mission Viejo

Gretchen Stroshcer Thomson Strosher Capistrano, LLC

PAST BOARD MEMBERS

N. Christian Anderson, III R. J. Brandon Russell S. Pennington, IV Myron Sukut

Mission Preservation Donor Profile

Thomas J. and Erma Jean Tracy Foundation Donates $270,000 for Mission’s Serra Chapel Preservation

During the press conference at Mission San Juan Capistrano’s annual celebration of Swallows Day, March 19, Mission officials announced that Mrs. Erma Jean Tracy and her family donated $270,000 in the memory of her late husband, Tom Tracy, for the conservation of the Mission’s historic Serra Chapel. The Chapel was built shortly after the Mission’s founding in 1771 and is a highlight of a Mission tour. The Chapel is undergoing a three-year, $1.5 million conservation treatment of the building, artifacts, and artwork. The donation will fund conservation of the remaining eight Stations of the Cross, the wall paintings and finishes, and include restoration and training of the large Crucifixion painting currently housed within the Chapel.

“We are honored and inspired by this donation given in memory of Tom Tracy by his widow and family through the Thomas J. and Erma Jean Tracy foundation,” remarked Michelle Lawrence, Executive Director. “This donation is critical and the results will be enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of visitors and future generations to come.”

El Viaje de Portola 44th Spring Trek Supports the Mission

El Viaje de Portola celebrated its 44th annual Three Day Spring Ride in late March. This group of riders celebrates Orange County and California history as well as The American West. Since its 1964 inception, the Annual Ride has helped restore and preserve Mission San Juan Capistrano. Like clockwork, this year’s ride began with its Annual “Gibby’s Mass” celebrated in the Serra Chapel, followed by the very special Empty Saddles Ceremony in the Portola Plaza of the historic Mission. It is during this ceremony that riders...
Executive Director’s Message

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See you on the path.

Michelle Lawrence
Executive Director

Gifts Given from 1/1/07 – 3/1/07

Anonymous
ABC Conservation Services
Andrew and Mimi Robuchon
Art and Gaye Birtcher
Robert and Dorothy Bloom
Robert and Frances Behnkencker
Campbell Hall Elementary
Judith Canady MacPherson
Redris Chace
Chorias
Ann Cordova
Nazario and Rebecca De Kansen
Den and Carol Dorkowski
Glen and Dian Duslay
Dr. Tom and Margaret Greubel
Ruben and F. Czapek
Charles and Michele Perrin-Gustafson
Doug and Beth Hammer
Mary Holt
Holl Family Trust
Carl and Diane Kernich
Werner and Catherine Lancaster
Las Golondrinas Mexican Food
In Ann Leech
Greg and Laurie Nakahara
George and Edwin O’Connell
Napa Valley Wine Bar
Norton’s
Brenda O’Meara
Oakwood School
Robert and Lisa Obzut
PennySetter
Gerry and Nina Perlz
Tobias J. Sable and Lauro Brige
Mary Steenrod-Mezevsky
Worker School
St. John’s Lutheran School/Orange
Staubachs Coffee
Myron and Murielle Sukut
Helen and Bernard Susann
Julie Thirtlen

In Honor of:

Doug and Betty Hammer
In Honor of the Grams Galenas
A.J. Leach
In Honor of her son, Borgan
Anonymous gift
In Honor of Tony & Melinda Mino

Gift of Membership – Consider giving the gift of a membership to the Mission San Juan Capistrano Preservation Society to family or friends. For only $35.00, an individual membership offers a year of free admission to the Mission and discounts to the gift shop. Gifts of memberships are tax deductible, and proceeds go to preservation. For information, contact Ellen Pierce at (949) 234-1375 or epierce@missionsjc.com.

Auction

Dr. Tom and Margaret Greubel – Surname
Steve Kistler – Watercolor Paintings
Piergiorgio Sangalli – Out of the Ordinary
John Leach – Mixed Media
Lara Martin – Flower Garden & Fine Art Show
Michelle Lawrence – Editor
"Flower Garden & Fine Art Show"
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Michelle Lawrence – Editor

www.missionsjc.com

Flower Garden & Fine Art Show Saturday & Sunday June 9-10, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

The two-day festival features unique plant and garden vendors, including gardening books, artists, lectures, and demonstrations. This year’s event features a Fine Arts Show in conjunction with SOCALPAPA and over seventy vendors/exhibitors of flowers, plants, and garden items, as well as fine art, music, seminars, and food. The event is supported by the City of San Juan Capistrano, O’Connell Landscape Maintenance and the Gardening Angels.

“Battle of the Mariachis” – Saturday, June 23, 10:00 am -2:30 pm

Mission San Juan Capistrano will present its 3rd annual “Battle of the Mariachis,” in which competing mariachi bands will perform, on Saturday, June 23, 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. The first place band will receive a trophy and $2,000 cash prize. Visitors will also have the opportunity to purchase authentic Mexican food. After the competition, return to the Mission in the evening, when Alturas will perform for the Music Under the Stars concert, 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. (See ticket information below.)

Music Under the Stars 2007 Concert Series Saturday, June 23 thru Saturday, 1, 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Tickets go on sale to Mission Preservation Society Members on Monday, April 2. General public tickets go on sale on Wednesday, April 16. To order tickets or tables of 10 call the Special Events Department at (949) 234-1321. Gates open at 5:30 pm.

- June 23–Alturas – Latin, Jazz & Pop • July 7–Pete Jacobs and his Wartime Radio Review-Swing Band • July 21–Celebrity Concert Bjorn Again – Abba Tribute Band • August 4–Max Bishop – Big Band, Swing • August 18–Jumping Jack Flash, Rolling Stones Tribute Band • September 1–Celebrity Concert The Fab Four • The Ultimate Tribute to the Beatles with Special Guest “Ed Sullivan”

No outside tables or caterers allowed. Go to www.missionsjc.com for more information.

Art Exhibit Featuring California Landscape by SOCALPAPA Members • March 31- June 26

Mission San Juan Capistrano welcomes “Painting the California Landscape,” an art exhibition by members of the Southern California Plein Air Painters Association (SOCALPAPA). March 31- June 26, in the Barracks Gallery. The exhibit features colorful images of the California landscape by local artists. SOCALPAPA is an organization of over 300 members dedicated to landscape painting in the plein air tradition. The membership is comprised broadly of professional and amateur artists painting in a variety of styles and mediums. For information, visit www.socalpapa.com. The exhibit viewing is included in the price of a paid admission to the Mission. Admission is free to members of the Mission Preservation Society. Members of the public are welcome to purchase the artists’ paintings, with 30% of the proceeds being donated by the organization to Mission San Juan Capistrano’s preservation.
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