



# The Jewel

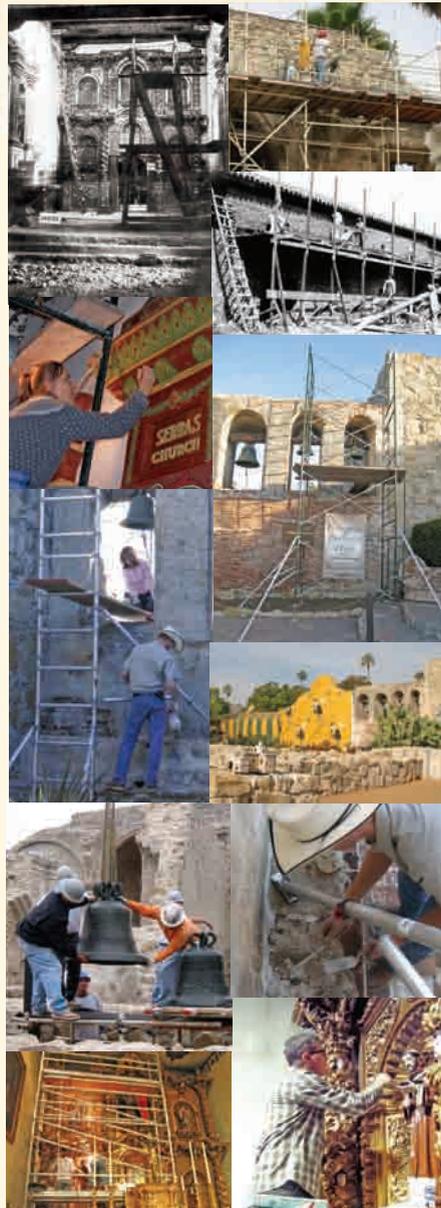
OF THE MISSIONS  
WINTER 2007 - Vol. IV, No. 1

## MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO *A History of Preservation*

Ever since the Landmarks Club began its preservation of the Great Stone Church more than a century ago, there has been an urgent need to protect the California missions.

At Mission San Juan Capistrano, there have been many preservation milestones during the past 80 years. For example, Fr. St. John O'Sullivan, Mission pastor from 1910 to 1933, restored Serra Chapel in the 1920s. Projects were also undertaken to ready the site for the Mission's 200th birthday in 1976, also the year of our nation's bicentennial. (The Mission was founded four months after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.)

In recent years, the Mission has carried out many significant projects, most notably the stabilization of the Great Stone Church in the summer of 2004. During that same year, recognizing the importance of preservation as a long-term priority, the Mission Preservation Foundation adopted a Five-Year Strategic Plan with an emphasis on pro-active preservation planning and work. This edition of *The Jewel* highlights recently completed projects. Page 3 details the installation of much-needed ultra violet film on windows in museum buildings. Page 4 provides an update on the conservation of three of the 14 historic Stations of the Cross paintings in Serra Chapel. On page 5, readers can learn about the recent challenge to successfully replace the Serra Chapel's east door lintel which had become a safety hazard.



Conservators from Griswold Conservation Associates continue to work in the Serra Chapel removing layers of tarnished overpaint and overleaf on the centuries-old Golden Retablo, or altarpiece, revealing its 17th century burnished water gilding. Work on the pulpit and altar is scheduled to follow this spring.

Preservation of the historic Bell Wall and South Wing began in early January. Bricks are being repointed and plasters stabilized. The South Wing's conservation is being performed on a room-by-room basis, beginning with the Padres' Quarters. May Paintings Conservators, the same team that performed work on Serra Chapel's entrance and St. Peregrine side-chapel, will remove the existing white latex paint to reveal an earlier decorative paint layer. Finally, tenting for the west museum room and Soldiers' Barracks will go up at the end of January in order to fumigate termite and beetle infestation.

The history of conservation and preservation at Mission San Juan Capistrano is one of vision, determination and achievement. Today, the Mission Preservation Team, supported by many generous benefactors, continues to make history. To stay informed, we invite members, donors and volunteers to look for future updates in the *Jewel*, or visit [www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com).

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



### *Recent Gifts Given*

#### *In honor of:*

Guy and M. Michelle Bergstrom  
In Honor of Maria Chappellear  
Doug and Beth Hammer  
In Honor of Jerry Giddens 75th Birthday  
Frank Holguin and Associates  
In Honor of Eric and Anne Enriquez  
John and Jaymie Jasinski  
In Honor of R. Jay and Kathy Kussmaul  
Larry and Mechelle Lawrence  
In Honor of Dylan and Lisa Lawrence  
Susan Morrison  
In Honor of Rita Gibby-Granard  
JoAn McDonald  
In Celebration of William Robinson  
Russ and Carolyn Weidman  
In Honor of Christopher Zell and  
Matthew Jacob

#### *In memory of:*

Fred and Doris Andersen  
In Memory of Mrs. Dorothy Dorn Andersen  
James and Deborah Kretzschar  
In Memory of Tom and Phyllis Finnely  
Clarence Gauldin  
In Memory of Benjamin Franklin Gauldin  
Anonymous Donor  
In Memory of Henrietta Duhart

#### *Please forgive our errors:*

Fred and Doris Andersen  
Melissa Anderson  
Tom Hunter and Courtney Reddick Hunter  
Matt and Lora Landon  
Tim and Mary Ann Thornton  
Emilie, Sophie and George Winckel

A visit to Mission San Juan Capistrano can cause one to develop a false sense of comfort that the work here is "finished." With lush gardens, improved signage, clean museum rooms, and uncluttered sidewalks - it is easy to take this historic place for granted. However, let me be the bearer of important news...work has just yet begun! In fact, our Foundation and organization are actively engaged in a history-making period at Orange County's number one historic site.

The list of "preservation related" things to do is extensive. The short term projects for 2007 include repairing the historic bell wall, improving conditions in the museum rooms, upgrading lighting systems in the Serra Chapel and South Wing stabilizing peeling paint and broken plasters in the South Wing, carrying out more fumigation of the Soldiers' Barracks and West Museum Wing - all work that we could not afford to do last year. Of course the work on Serra Chapel's three year project continues, and planning for the future upgrade of the Mission's overall museum is underway.

Even with all this maintenance and preservation work, we also want the world to love the Mission! We want everyone to remember their experience at this unique setting either as a student, patron at an event, attendee at a concert, or tourist experiencing a quiet afternoon. We want students that cannot afford field trips to have sponsors. We want families to create shared memories in a setting that just gets better with time. We want the community to come together in a wholesome environment to celebrate old, and create new, traditions alike.

On a personal note, a special friend of mine, who is also an executive director for a non-profit organization, recently presented me with a beautiful silver necklace which embodies the following words of Mahatma Gandhi,

*"Be the change you wish to see."*

This quote, along with the active and dedicated support of donors, members, and volunteers, buoy me during the demanding days. I know that I am here for a reason, that our preservation and education work matters, and that each day is a gift. To each and every one of you who support our efforts to improve, enhance, protect, and revive the Old Mission, thank you.

Siempre Adelante,

Mechelle Lawrence, Executive Director

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(949) 234-1300

Visit our web site

[www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com)

The site contains details on the Mission's history, festivals, concerts, educational programs, preservation, volunteer opportunities, news, how to make donations, gift shop, and much more.

**Gift of Membership** – Consider giving the gift of a membership to the Mission San Juan Capistrano Preservation Society to family or friends. For only \$30, 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](mailto:epierce@missionsjc.com).

## MISSION PRESERVATION FOUNDATION BOARD PROFILE



*Tony Forster*

Tony Forster traces his family history in San Juan Capistrano to the 1830s, when his great great grandfather, Don Juan Forster, first arrived to the area and took up residence at Mission San Juan Capistrano. He purchased it from the Mexican government for \$710.00. He and his family lived at the Mission for 20 years.

Tony was raised in San Juan, and attended the Mission Parish School. His grandfather once served as Administrator at the Mission, and his mother served as a docent in the 1920s. Tony's father was a rancher and mechanic, and owned the White Garage, one of the few places motorists could come to have their car repaired.

### Mission Photos Requested for Faces of the Present Exhibit

Mission San Juan Capistrano invites the public to submit favorite photographs of themselves, families, and friends taken during a visit to the Mission. Selected photographs will be used in the creation of a Faces of the Present exhibition in the Barracks Gallery to debut on Swallows Day 2007.

#### **Please use the following guidelines:**

- 1) No more than two photos per family.
- 2) Include submittee's name, address and phone number.
- 3) The date when the photo was taken.
- 4) Who is in the photo, and any special memory attached to the photo.

Tony is a graduate of West Point, and served in the U.S. Army for six years. He has been engaged in a variety of business pursuits, including operating an RV storage facility and an automobile parts business. He also served as Mayor of San Juan Capistrano 1971-72.

Tony is President of the San Juan Capistrano Historical Society and founder of the Capistrano Valley Boys & Girls Club. He also works as a professional Santa, and each year plays the part for the City's annual San Juan Capistrano Christmas tree lighting ceremony.

He is a docent and Living History character at the Mission, portraying his ancestor Don Juan Forster. Tony has loaned the Mission many historical items from his family's collection, including paintings, a silver saddle and the "gossip rock" in the front court yard.

Tony joined the Mission Preservation Foundation Board in 2003. He explained, "I come from a family of volunteers. My family has long been identified with the Mission, so it's a perfect fit."

Tony brings a legacy of service to the Old Mission, representing the old families of the community. His family deserves to be recognized and celebrated for their continued commitment to the Mission, and most significantly, their investment of time to benefit its preservation for future generations.

Mail photographs to:

**Faces of the Present  
Mission San Juan Capistrano,  
26801 Ortega Highway,  
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675**

Photos may be emailed as a jpg or pdf image to: photos@missionsjc.com; photos should be 300 dpi and no larger than 5 MB. Please credit the photographer if taken by a professional. By sending in a photograph, the sender gives the Mission permission to use the photograph; photos will not be returned. Photos are due by February 5th.

## 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 Cvengros**  
*National Retirement Partners, Inc.*

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

**Arthur B. Birtcher**  
*Birtcher Anderson Properties*

**Tony Forster**  
*San Juan Capistrano  
Historical Society*

**Michael Hagan (ret.)**  
*Furon Corporation*

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

**Robert McDonough**  
*Select Remedy Temporary Service*

**Anne Marie Moiso Leonard**  
*Rancho Mission Viejo*

**George O'Connell**  
*O'Connell Landscape Maintenance*

**Connie Spenuzza**  
*Imperial Manufacturing Company*

**Gretchen Stroscher Thomson**  
*Stroscher Capistrano, LLC*

#### PAST BOARD MEMBERS

N. Christian Anderson, III  
R. J. Brandes  
Russell S. Penniman, IV  
Myron Sukut



*Docent John Tattam, who at age 84 is the second oldest active docent, led the most tours in 2006, with 121. It was the second time he was honored for being the tour leader.*

## Docent Society Honored

Mission San Juan Capistrano Docent Society recently honored its top members during a 25th anniversary recognition dinner. Seven docents were honored with “Maggie” awards for their service: Doris Babin, Helen Gavin, Barbara LeBlanc, Cecelia Mandala, Elinore O’Connell, Mary Susa and John Tattam.

Mechelle Lawrence, Executive Director, remarked, “The Mission staff is inspired daily by the gift of time the docents invest into keeping this Mission the most vibrant and active historic site in the county. They are indeed ‘the best generation’ giving to the community, long after retirement, and doing so with a willing heart. The students enjoy their guided tours, and for many their visit is a lifetime memory. Our volunteers make us proud!”

Docents lead about 2,500 visitor tours each year, and engage in a variety of special projects. More docents are always needed. For information, contact Pat March, (949) 234-1322.

## 3rd Historic Station of the Cross Painting Conserved, Serra Chapel Preservation Efforts Continue

The conservation and re-framing of a third of 14 *Stations of the Cross* paintings in historic Serra Chapel has been completed. The paintings date back several centuries and depict Christ on the road to His Crucifixion. Age has faded the images, and the frames which are not original, need replacement.

“These beautiful, historical works of art are an important feature of historic Serra Chapel,” explained Connie Spenuzza, M.S. Ed., a member of the Board of Directors of the Mission Preservation Foundation. “It’s our goal to restore these priceless works of art to their original beauty, and preserve and display them for enjoyment by Mission visitors for decades to come.”

The conserved painting is entitled *Station of the Cross I: Jesus is Condemned to Death*. The cost for conserving and re-framing each painting is about \$10,000 each. Donors, such as the Mission Docent Society and several other dedicated individuals, have funded this project.

As part of the Serra Chapel Conservation Project, the Mission officials will obtain lighting and electrical bids later this year, so that the full effect of the conservation treatment can be appreciated. Due to the floodlights and extension cords now serving as the Mission’s lighting system, the Chapel remains poorly illuminated, hence the paintings’ full beauty cannot be enjoyed. The conservation of Serra Chapel will continue for almost two more years. The fourth painting will be completed at the end of January.

## Enroll in the New Docent Training Classes

Mission San Juan Capistrano will present a series of new docent training classes on four consecutive Saturdays, February 3, 10, 17 and 24, from 9 a.m. – 12:00. Docents must be 21 years or older. For information call Pat March, (949) 234-1322.

## Mission Living History Society’s Trail Along & Open House

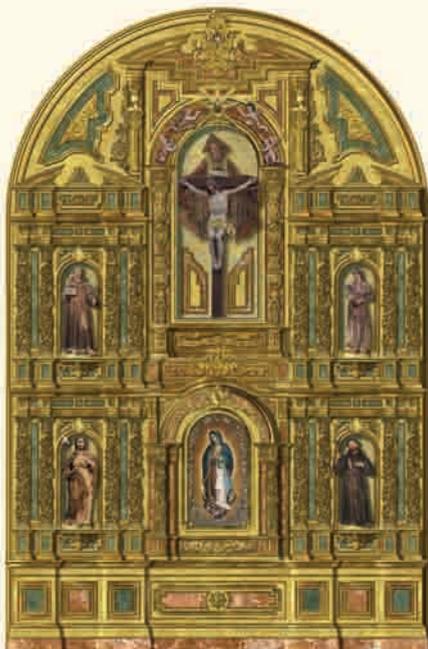
Mission San Juan Capistrano’s Living History Society will present a “Trail Along and Open House” for potential new members on Saturday, February 10, at 11 a.m. on the Mission grounds. Those interested in volunteering will be given an introduction to the program and have the chance to watch members in action. For information, call Pat March, (949) 234-1322.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Pat Kay has been a docent for 18 years and a member of the Gardening Angels since its founding more than a decade ago. Pat received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2006 Employee and Volunteer Luncheon, for her years of service. This edition of *The Jewel* is recognizing Miss Kay for her dedication to Mission San Juan Capistrano.

## Mission's Grand Retablo Installation Planned for Spring



The parish at Mission Basilica San Juan Capistrano is awaiting the delivery of a Grand Retablo, a decorative altarpiece, which was constructed in Madrid, Spain. The \$2 million piece is the creation of 84 craftspeople, and stands 42 feet tall, 30 feet wide and weighs 16 tons. The piece was inspired by the retablo in the historic Serra Chapel, which was created in Spain nearly 400 years ago.

"A retablo is a uniquely designed piece of art, whose intended impact is to bring its viewer closer to God and the saints through the experience of its beauty," explained Fr. Arthur A. Holquin, Mission pastor, who is spearheading the project.

Retablo means "behind the table" or altar. The Grand Retablo will include images of the Holy Trinity, Blessed Junipero Serra, Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Joseph and Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Patroness of the Diocese of Orange, and more. The retablo is a project of Talleres de Arte Granda, a liturgical arts manufacturer in Madrid, Spain. Fr. Holquin and Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence both toured the facility to oversee the work.



84 Spanish craftspeople worked on the Grand Retablo.

The Retablo's installation is part of our overall effort to maintain and upgrade the Basilica Church. Last Fall major construction work was performed on the Basilica in preparation for the arrival of the Grand Retablo. This included the placement of 15-foot pylons into the ground to support the piece.

The idea of a retablo was conceived by the late Msgr. Paul Martin, and was brought to fruition under the leadership of Fr. Holquin. The funding came from the gifts of two financial benefactors.

### Mission San Juan Capistrano 2005-06 Annual Report

The Mission Preservation Foundation has released its Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2005-2006. The new report provides a summary of the activities and programs provided by the Mission over the last year, along with a review of the Foundation's finances, revenue, expenses and donations. The report was mailed to donors and members of the Mission Preservation Society. View it online at [www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com).



Italian tenor Vittorio Grigolo

**SAVE THE DATE**

### "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 Arezzo, Italy, in 1977. His first album, "In The Hands of Love," entered the British Top Ten setting a new sales record for a classical solo artist and was released in the United States in September 2006.

For more information, visit [www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com) and click on Benefit Gala Concert and Dinner. To receive an invitation, please call Pat March: (949) 234-1322. Pre-concert reception, concert, and plated dinner is \$250 per person. Traditional Jewelers, will again donate items for an Opportunity Drawing to generate additional preservation project funding. To join The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel, Sunwest and Pacific Mercantile banks in underwriting the evening, please contact Barb Beier, (949) 234-1323.



## East Door Urgent Project Report: Lintel Replaced in Serra Chapel

The Preservation Team recently replaced a severely deteriorated door lintel in the Serra Chapel. The decayed lintel was the top portion of the doorframe that supports the adobe wall above. Although the goal of preservation is to retain as much of the original material as possible, the lintel had deteriorated beyond the point of repair and had to be replaced, to prevent the wall above from collapsing.

“This was one of many urgent preservation projects requiring our immediate attention,” remarked Debora Rodrigues. She noted the California Missions Foundation provided a grant to cover the nearly \$25,000 cost of the project. Extensive preservation work and repair is planned this year, not only in Serra Chapel but in the Mission’s South Museum Wing.

## Window Tinting To Protect Museum Rooms

In order to ensure Mission San Juan Capistrano remains a top-notch place of education, the Preservation Team carried out an important museum project involving the installation of protective filming on all windows, in early January.

Sun Tamers Window Tinting worked with Catherine Hayes, museum conservator, to apply ultra violet window film on the windows of the Mission’s museum buildings, in the front gate office, Serra Chapel, and the Gift Shop. This film will stop fading and deterioration of displays caused by ultra violet light. This project is funded by donations and grants.



## Historic Our Lady of the Pillar Statue Returns Home to Serra Chapel

Mission San Juan Capistrano’s early 18th century Our Lady of the Pillar statue is one of the Mission’s many artifacts which dates to its earliest days. After being on exhibit in the museum room for many years, it has been returned to its original home in the Serra Chapel.



*Our Lady of the Pillar statue*

Art Birtcher, a Mission Preservation Foundation board member, explained, “We believe the rightful, historical home for this liturgical piece is Serra Chapel. We are proud to return her after all these years, and hope that parishioners and visitors will better appreciate this special statue.”

The Mission’s Preservation Team placed the statue on an eight-foot high shelf near the altar area using an unobtrusive support mount to protect her from falling.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MISSION



### Mission Celebrates Lincoln Legacy with Exhibit, Lecture and Festival

*Mission San Juan Capistrano  
celebrates President Abraham  
Lincoln's special role in  
Mission history with a Lincoln  
exhibit, lecture and festival-  
January 17 - February 20*

**NEW EXHIBIT** – Visitors can enjoy Lincoln-era memorabilia, arranged by the Mission's Artifacts Council. On the day of the Festival, February 17, the exhibit will feature the original document signed by Abraham Lincoln deeding the Mission back to the Church. Other unique Civil War-era documents from the Lincoln Memorial Shrine will also be on display: a Conkling letter written by Lincoln in defense of using blacks in the Union army; a signed Lincoln document approving the draft for the 8th District of New York in 1863; a soldier's letter regarding the assassination of Lincoln, April 1865; a signed Lincoln letter appointing Fletcher Height as federal judge in California in 1861; and a presentation of the Emancipation Proclamation, 1863. Other historical items of interest and publications about Lincoln, including children's books, will also be on display. This exhibition of Lincoln memorabilia will be open January 17 – February 20.

**SPECIAL LECTURE** – Richard Hanks, Ph.D., will discuss "The Making of Lincoln," on Thursday, February 15, 11 a.m. in the Barracks' Gallery. Dr. Hanks grew up in Beardstown, Illinois, just outside of Springfield. He is an ancestor of Nancy Hanks, Lincoln's mother. Lincoln was also a regular visitor to Beardstown. The courtroom of Dr. Hanks' father, a judge, was the site of Lincoln's most famous courtroom victory, the Almanac Trial. Dr. Hanks has a Ph.D. in Native American History, and has published two articles on Abraham Lincoln. He is currently an archivist for the Lincoln Memorial Shrine in Redlands. For more information call (949) 234-1320.

**FESTIVAL** – The Mission presents its annual Lincoln Festival on Saturday, February 17, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. The day will feature Lincoln portrayer William Peck and other characters from the Lincoln era presenting a fictionalized interpretation of historic events, including the Fife and Drum Corps and the 116th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. Events feature food, storytelling, children's arts and crafts. The exhibit, lecture and festival are all free with paid admission or membership. For more information call (949) 234-1320.

## ART EXHIBITIONS

*Held in the Soldiers' Barracks Gallery*

### Lincoln Exhibit

January 17th – February 20th

### David Imlay

February 24th – March 27th

Reception Saturday, February 24th

6:00 -8:00 pm

### SOCAL PAPA Fine Arts Show

March 30th – June 26th

### Faces of the Present

#### Debuts March 19th

*Orange County Residents Photography  
Exhibit & Panel Discussion*

Held in the Rancho Room

## FEATURED ART



### Artist Hyatt Moore to Sell "The Capistrano Mural," 20% of Proceeds to Benefit Mission Preservation

Artist Hyatt Moore has offered his classic "The Capistrano Mural" for sale, and has pledged to donate 20% of proceeds to Mission preservation. The mural is an oil on canvas painting 10'5" wide by 4'9" tall featuring 14 members of the Mission's Living History Society in period costumes. Those depicted include a Spanish padre, pirates, Spanish ladies and gentlemen, cowboys and more. To view the image, visit the artist's website [www.hyattmoore.com](http://www.hyattmoore.com), select the menu dropdown "The Artist" and click on "Murals." (The mural was previously named "Motley Crew.") Its cost is \$9,000, plus tax, which means an \$1,800 donation for Mission preservation. To inquire about purchasing the mural, contact the artist at (949) 240-4642.

FOUNDED 1776

MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

*Preservation Society*

26801 Ortega Highway  
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675  
(949) 234-1300  
www.missionsjc.com

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Permit # 61



**ADMINISTRATION**

Preservation Foundation,  
general administration  
Mechelle Lawrence  
949-234-1311 or Brenda  
Mumma 949-234-1312

**DEVELOPMENT**

Fundraising,  
marketing & donations  
Ellen Pierce 949-234-1375  
or Barb Beier  
949-234-1323

**ON-SITE EVENTS**

Festivals, concerts, art exhibits,  
receptions, private events.  
Sabrina Samczak  
Rita Gibby-Granard  
949-234-1321

**VISITORS CENTER**

Tours, reservations,  
school programs  
Regina Lozic  
949-234-1318

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Living History, Docents,  
Gardening Angels, Artifacts  
Council, Women's Guild,  
Mission Youth Leadership  
Pat March 949-234-1322

# Mission Activities Calendar



**LINCOLN CELEBRATION! FESTIVAL, EXHIBIT & LECTURE**

**Saturday, February 17, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm**

Living history members commemorate President Lincoln's return of control of the Mission to the Catholic Church in a fictionalized interpretation of the historic event. Featuring food, storytelling, and arts and crafts.

**RETURN OF THE SWALLOWS DAY WEEKEND**

**Family Day, Sunday, March 18, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm**

**St. Joseph's Day - Traditional Day, Monday, March 19, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm**

A two day Festival marking the Annual Return of the Swallows to Mission San Juan Capistrano with music, dancing, vendors, food, and pageantry. See website, [www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com), for different program schedule each day.

**2007 FLOWER GARDEN & FINE ART SHOW**

**Saturday and Sunday, June 9 & 10, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm**

The annual garden show featuring plant vendors, art, food, and garden and art lectures. This year's event features a Fine Arts Show in conjunction with SOCALPAPA.

**MUSIC UNDER THE STARS CONCERT SERIES**

**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 Special Events Department at (949) 234-1321. Six concerts on Saturday evenings, June 23 thru September 1, 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm. No outside tables.

**ONGOING EVENTS**

**TWO FOR ONE WEDNESDAYS ~**

Each Wednesday, a resident of San Juan Capistrano with a valid photo ID can bring in a second person for free. Must show ID. Not good with any other offer or discount.

**VOLUNTEER DONUT THURSDAYS**

~ Each Thursday, 9 – 11 am, the Mission offers free coffee and donuts for volunteers and prospective volunteers in the Visitor's Center. Information: (949) 234-1322.

**MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION**

**DAY** ~ Held every third Wednesday each month. Members show their card for a free gift or \$5.00 gift credit at the Gift Shop - (1 per membership).

The Mission Calendar of Events is subject to change. Current information: (949) 234-1300. See our web site at [www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com).