



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Joe Haakenson
JUVE Creative, Inc.
(714) 841 9600
joe@juvecreative.com

HISTORIC MOMENT: GATE HOUSE OPENING

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, Calif. (Feb. 20, 2013) -- Mission San Juan Capistrano is more than 230 years old, making preservation among the most vital duties of those who oversee the continued viability of the historic landmark and birthplace of Orange County.

During the first week of March, the Mission will commemorate the opening of the Gate House -- part of the Gate House Preservation Project -- with a special media/VIP event, followed one day later by the opening to the public.

On Tuesday, March 5, the Gate House Opening will feature proclamations by San Juan Capistrano Mayor John Taylor and Pat Bates, Orange County Supervisor Fifth District during a special media/VIP event.

On Wednesday, March 6, the public will be invited in and can take advantage of a 2-for-1 admission prices.

"To me, this project will over years, create greater relevance to the broader public, and ensure the long term viability of this historically and religiously significant landmark," said Mechelle Lawrence Adams, Executive Director of Mission San Juan Capistrano. "This should free the Mission from having to rely on adding more events and overselling the Mission. In essence, the project allows the Mission to quiet its experience and create a financial means for its continued focus on preserving its history. "

The project included a variety of aspects aimed at preservation and making the visitor experience more rewarding:

Relocating the existing, privately operated, Mission Store use to the corner, making the historic Sala available for future museum space

Constructing a new ticket booth and welcome area for guests

Relocating and constructing a new group entry

Installing trees, benches, and landscaping to be enjoyed by the public

Rehabilitating the historically significant 1916 Original Gate House in accordance with the Department of Interior's Standards for the Care and Treatment of Historically Significant Buildings.

"The Mission will no longer be encased in a fortress-like wall that grew from the mid-1900's to the early 2000's." Lawrence Adams said. "Its welcome will no longer include a failing wall, narrow sidewalk and box hedges to greet you. The Mission will now sit easily and accessibly to its many audiences, from locals to visitors from all over the world, creating a warm and welcoming environment that pays tribute to its many chapters of history.

"As envisioned from the start, the Mission -- through its architecture and pedestrian environment on the outside -- will raise the expectations of the visiting public so that they can see without words, that they are about to enjoy a very meaningful and rich environment. In a historic and religious environment, architecture has meaning. And now, because of the many talents involved, the architectural details appear on both sides of the project and not just the street side."

The final stage of the project will be marked by the opening of the relocated Mission Store in July.

"The Project's conclusion will mark a new chapter for the historic downtown and Mission San Juan Capistrano," Lawrence Adams said. "The community has the Mission Preservation Foundation, a team of hardworking and talented vendors, trades and crafts people, Mission staff, donors, and local volunteers to credit for this project.

"For the downtown area, the Mission's improved access and longer operating hours should help to sustain the important, and yet fragile, sub economy of San Juan Capistrano. We hope that this project helps to protect and support the hard working owners and operators of local restaurants, shops and venues.

"The Project will at its conclusion stand as the visual and emotional anchor to the downtown and hopefully many will see it as representing the San Juan Capistrano community as vibrant, historic, and meaningful."

Attached is an information packet regarding the project and answers to frequently asked questions.

About Mission San Juan Capistrano:

Known as the "Jewel of the Missions," Mission San Juan Capistrano is a historic landmark and museum that boasts of quality permanent exhibits featuring original artifacts as well as traveling and temporary exhibits on a wide variety of topics.

The site itself serves as a living outdoor museum with original buildings constructed by Native Americans in the 18th century including the Serra Chapel, Great Stone Church, and the original padres' quarters of the South Wing.

The Mission was founded on November 1, 1776 by Padre Junipero Serra as the seventh in the chain of the twenty-one California missions established by Spain, and is Orange County's only mission. Every year, over 50,000 students visit the Mission and engage in an inspirational learning experience via the Mission Matters programming, as part of their State required California history studies.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and is supported by the Mission Preservation Foundation, which is comprised of business and community leaders committed to ensuring the long term

preservation and viability of Orange County's only Mission. The Mission receives no funding from either the Church or the State of California and charges admission funds as a means of providing public access.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. Open Daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Good Friday afternoon. Admission is \$9 adults; \$8 seniors (60 years or over); \$6 children (ages 4 to 11); and children ages 3 and under are admitted free. Free audio guide with senior and adult admission. For more information, call (949) 234-1300 or visit www.missionsjc.com.