



MISSION BELL

Vol. 6, No. 2 / Summer 2017

Ring in the News of the Preservation Campaign for Mission San Antonio de Padua

A Message from President **AL PAROLINI**

The Mission Days event was a great success! Fun was had by all in attendance and it was such a beautiful day in Jolon. And where else can you get an 1800 era great, authentic meal for the reasonable price of \$10.00?

I believe the greatest gift I witnessed at the event was the numerous individuals who consistently volunteer their talents, time and energy—many traveling hundred of miles to participate in this annual event. To those who pull off this event flawlessly, the various musicians, adobe brick makers, assorted artists and local volunteers, each and all are to be thanked. And thank you to all who attended the event! It was wonderful to be able to share with everyone the retrofit work that is complete and the work in progress being done in the West Convento retreat rooms.

As a California Historical Landmark, Mission San Antonio remains open via two revenue sources. First, operating as a retreat center for the entire Central Coast. This revenue, when combined with the revenues generated by the gift shop and events held at the mission, bears the lion's share of the mission's annual operating expenses. Absent finishing the retrofit of all the retreat rooms, and the potential revenue generated from their use, the mission would inevitably face closure.

The retreat center welcomes a variety of groups and Mission San Antonio has in the past hosted in excess of 40 weekend retreats each calendar year. With two full Convento wings committed to guest rooms, the facility has the capacity to host as few as one visitor or groups as large as sixty-five. Overnight guests include many educational groups, a wide array of diverse spiritual/religious groups, family groups, elderly social groups, at-risk youth groups, Native American groups, artists, photographers, writers, psychiatrists, and more.

Over the past twenty years I have attended many retreats held at this sacred mission and personally speaking, its closure would be a catastrophic loss to all it currently serves.

We have an impressive number of donors who have donated thus far in 2017 and for that we are very grateful! Rest assured that your generous donations are being utilized very effectively and have kept the crews on site and allowed the retrofit work to continue.

At this point and time, the Campaign's cash reserves raised have been fully committed and we have an immediate need for additional funds so we can continue moving forward. As the Campaign enters this extremely critical funding period, I have a very simple request: May we count on your immediate



2017 Mission Days

financial support to continue the work of preserving this beloved mission.

Please follow us on social media and visit the Campaign website: www.preservemissionsanantonio.org to view the restoration progress. We sincerely appreciate your support and continued commitment to preserving Mission San Antonio de Padua! ■

The Mission Marathon Matters *By Joan Steele, Mission Administrator*



West Convento roof once again has its tile covering.

THE BOSTON MARATHON, the Big Sur Marathon... these events may take place in a day, but the training for them goes on for months and months (sometimes even years) beforehand. Participants in these events understand well that if you want to cross the finish line, you need to put in the work for a very extended period of time.

The same with our Mission Marathon. Perhaps we should have named our seismic retrofit/restoration project with a name like that to emphasize the extended period of time that a multi-phase, multi-year Campaign requiring multi-millions to complete would take. We are well into the marathon at two and half years and approximately \$7 Million behind us.

How sad it would be, therefore, to have to quit the race before crossing the finish line. We are once again at a critical financial point. We need to raise approximately \$1.8 Million IMMEDIATELY to complete the plumbing and ADA compliancy issues in the North Convento Wing and move onto the seismic work in the next phase – encompassing the two dining rooms and the kitchen,

through to the end of the north wing of the building.

Together, we have accomplished so much! The seismic, electrical and ADA requirements on the church have been completed. The cracked bell has been replaced by a newly forged bell, made possible by the generosity of the Azcona family. It is our desire to hear the voice of that bell ring out for the first time at this year's Fiesta Mass at 11am on Sunday, June 11, 2017. The seismic strengthening, electrical and ADA work of the South Convento wing (encompassing the museum, gift shop, parish

library and offices) and the West Convento retreat wing are almost complete. The electrical infrastructure upgrade to handle the increased site load is nearing completion. Seismic stabilization of the north retreat wing is complete. Electrical, plumbing and ADA compliancy in this area are currently in progress. Thus, our predicament is that we need to move the contractor's team on to the seismic work of the next phase and keep our electricians, roofers, plumbers and all other specialty sub-contractors on task to complete the North Convento. This takes money that we don't have. While we are realistically looking for approximately \$4+ Million to complete the entire site, we are concentrating right now on raising cash and pledges to the tune of \$1.8 Million.

I realize that our Campaign to Preserve Mission San Antonio de Padua is a secular 501 c-3 non-profit organiza-



New stall showers in west wing.



New ADA compliant shower in west wing.

tion. As the Mission Parish Administrator and Director of Religious Education and Sacramental Preparation, however, I would be remiss in my duties if I failed to point out that this project is first and foremost saving a still active Catholic Mission. I expect, therefore, that God is intimately interested in preserving a place that continues to serve as a sacred refuge and place of spiritual inspiration to His people of all faiths. I do believe that we will be successful in finishing what we started. After many, many hours of prayer and lots of sleepless nights, I believe that this project's completion is firmly within His Will. That said, it still requires that we do our part.

I am asking each and every one of you reading this article to look within yourself. Ask yourself, "Why do I love the Mission? Is it because it was the subject of your 4th grade social studies project? In the Mission that time forgot, did history come alive for you and allow you to travel back to the Mission era in a tangible way as you walked the grounds and imagined a day in the life of a Mission inhabitant?

Was it because you received your Sacraments here... Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage? Did you come here on a retreat, finding the healing offered by this sacred place set apart from the world in such a way that peace and serenity can nourish your soul? Did you attend a funeral here and find comfort and spiritual support within the historic adobe walls? So many of us have encountered life-changing experiences at this Mission. It is special for so many reasons.



New bathroom in the West Convento retreat wing.

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For those who embrace the historical significance of this place as their primary focus, here too, Mission San Antonio delivers. Due to its location, nestled against the foothills of the Santa Lucia Mountain range, presently surrounded by a large, active, military base, this site remains a precious historic snapshot of an era long gone. The dry climate helps to preserve the underground historic footprint, making this Mission site an archeological gem.

Whatever your reason for loving Mission San Antonio de Padua, the fact remains that it is loved! Now is the time to prove that. We save what we love.

Do you love it enough to save it for future generations? Do you love it enough to give financially? Whether giving for the first time, or repeating an oft repeated practice, will you give sacrificially to allow this project to move ahead towards the finish line?



Windows – sporting a much needed facelift.



All external Convento doors will now share this fresh color.

It's a marathon. Let us work towards being able to join St. Paul in stating, "I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7)

Let's give it all we've got and keep charging ahead! ■

MEET OUR BOARD

Board Member ANN BECKETT

How and when did you first come to know of Mission San Antonio?

We came to live in King City in 1968. We visited the mission but started going there regularly in 1970, when the commune was there. We shared wonderful music and liturgy, meals, and had a lot of fun. In 1979 we moved to Lockwood and I have been a parishoner ever since. I work on the museum team, play the organ and do whatever needs to be done; I have worked in the garden, taught religious education and substituted in the gift shop. I serve on the board of the Friends of Historic Mission San Antonio.

Why are you giving your time to help preserve the Mission?

I believe that Mission San Antonio gives a glimpse into history, for 4th graders (our most frequent visitors, complying with California State Standards for Social Studies) and everyone else. I believe that it needs to be preserved for the future, no easy task, since we are in the middle of a retrofit. There is a spiritual aspect to the place that visitors easily recognize and that deserves



recognition. Brother Joachim Grant once told me that the air is special at the mission and indeed there was once a tuberculosis sanatorium up Mission Creek during World War 2.

Do you have a special memory of Mission San Antonio?

My four girls grew up around the mission, running around, dipping their hands in the fountain, taking round sheets of ice from the bedrock mortars in the winter, playing in a band at mass and receiving their sacraments. They attended Franciscan celebrations, like the Fiestas and the 50th anniversary party for Father Joe LaRue OFM and his two brothers as priests. When she was about six, our daughter Sophie shut her hand in the car door after mass. Brother Joachim Grant, OFM, gave her first aid in the kitchen; Sophie wrote him a thank you note and he wrote her a thank you note for the thank you note. We still have it. My daughters still have a Franciscan attitude toward life: if it isn't broken, don't fix it, recycle, be gracious and thankful.

What are your hopes for the future of Mission San Antonio?

I hope that we can continue to fund the retrofit and to provide for the future needs on the mission, buildings and artifacts. I hope that we will be a place where research and studies into history can take place. Most of all I hope that we can remain a parish. We now have visiting priests for mass, but we are a tight group, providing for events, fixing things, gardening, helping wherever there is need. I hope that spirit will bring in new people and that the mission will continue to be alive, thanks to the grace of God. ■



Former U.S. Congressman Sam Farr Reflects on Mission San Antonio de Padua

I GREW UP running around the Carmel Mission which is surrounded by houses and, I guess by osmosis, was beginning to really appreciate the historical value of the mission properties and how California began. When my father was in the State Legislature he took me a lot of places in South County, including Mission San Antonio, which was in very good shape in those days. It struck me when I visited Mission San Antonio, wow this looks like it really was when it was built... a real authentic mission, not an urbanized mission.

I guess I didn't fully appreciate it all until I became a county supervisor, and then – although I never represented that area as a supervisor, I was very interested in the whole county. I got very interested in how you do economic development and really what is the smart way to do it. And it hit me then that our history, what we say is here in Monterey

is where California began, but it's not just Monterey but also South Monterey County and it's so important to build on that. Certain institutions of this state all began – well, frankly, the governance began with the missions until they were secularized.

In the 1970s when I was a Monterey County Supervisor and, later, chair of the Economic Development Committee in the Assembly, I was always thinking of ways in which we could enhance investment in the Mission. Mission San Antonio is so unique and certainly one of the most beautiful missions, but at that time there were a lot of problems.

One idea I proposed to the King City School District was to create a mission camp, because every fourth-grader in California has to learn about the missions as part of studying early California history. Currently, fourth graders participate in day trips to the Mission, but I thought there's nothing

where kids can go to a camp and pretend like they're in a mission-setting and really get back to how it all began. A place where they can feel the aesthetics and interpret what it was like to be in California in the 1770s. No other mission can provide this type of experience because it is the only mission today in an undeveloped setting.

Today, I still think this is a great idea! There really is remarkable history that came out of the area, and there were also so many firsts in California that happened at Mission San Antonio. For example, by building the first aqueduct irrigation canals before it was being done anywhere else there was the early invention of water distribution. Also, the water-powered gristmill was constructed to grind the Mission grain.

There are a lot of things to learn about how this great state launched itself and the importance of the California Missions. The future of Monterey County will continue to be ecotourism and "selling" our beautiful scenery to those who visit our area. Mission San Antonio is so beautiful, but so isolated, efforts need to be put in place so that the Mission is one of the main attractions in Monterey County. My hope for Mission San Antonio is the funding to restore the Mission will be raised and we can then look for ways to enhance tourism to the South County area that includes Mission San Antonio. We need to make sure there is continued investment in Mission San Antonio now and in the future by attracting more people to discover South County, to see how the State began, to taste our wines, and to support our unique history. ■

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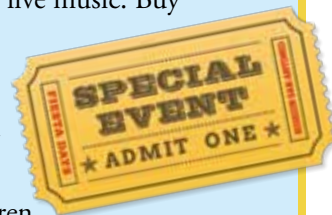
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MISSION BELL Summer 2017

THE ANNUAL *Fiesta Days*

**Sunday, June 11, 2017
Mission San Antonio**

The day begins with a special Fiesta Mass at 11:00 am followed by a traditional oak-fired barbeque offering your choice of chicken or top sirloin dinners. Dance to live music. Buy a homemade dessert, enjoy a glass of beer or wine, and visit with local artisans whose wares will be on display. Your children will have a great time winning prizes at the game booths. This is a real community-oriented family event that's not to be missed! It is a fun filled day for all!



***Funds raised from this event help to support
the daily operations of Mission San Antonio.***

The content for the newsletter is put together by volunteers. If you would like to contribute to a future edition or see something that needs a correction, please contact Elizabeth Diaz at 831-386-0599/info@preservemissionsanantonio.org.