



Holiday Greetings from California Mission Studies Association

Dear Mission Studies Colleagues,

La Véspera de Navidad, Christmas Vespers, what we call Christmas Eve, was a favorite time for young children in Spanish and Mexican California. At the ranchos and the mission pueblos like Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, the children would climb onto the flat tile or brea (tar) covered roofs of the adobes. From this position, they could look down on the festivities.

Rancheros rode into town or one of the mission settlements in elaborate dress. Some came on horseback with beautifully tooled and silver inlaid saddles. Others arrived in carretas (ox carts). The carretas were colorfully decorated for the feast of the Nativity, a practice begun during Europe's middle ages. Our modern practice of floats for parades comes from this tradition.

Christmas Eve was also called *La Noche Buena*, "The Good Night." The celebration centered on the Midnight or Vigil mass celebrated both in the mission churches and in private chapels at the larger ranchos. Joaquín Estrada's family often used the old stone assisténcia of Santa Margarita de Cortona which still stands under the shelter of a barn on the old Santa Margarita Ranch. Here rough cholos and elegantly deck out rancheros with their families would observe the religious rites.

This was often followed by the presentation of *Los Pastorelas* (the shepherds). Young people in appropriate costume would act out the rôles of the events in Bethlehem as described in the Gospel of Luke. The staging was accompanied by the notes of a sprightly guitar.

The performance, following a two hour long midnight mass, would be enlivened with a great deal of comic relief. The company included the hermit clown, Ermitano, the lazy vagabond Bartolo, Lucifer the Devil, who was booed by the audience, and the archangel Gabriel.

In the pueblos, the party might continue with a Posadas, going from house to house, emulating the Holy Family in its search for shelter, celebrated nightly from December 16-24. Fr. Florencio Ibáñez of Soledad Mission in the Salinas Valley composed a special Pastorelas for the arrival of the Royal Governor, José Arrilaga in 1800. This became the favorite version of the play. A copy of it is in the Mariano Vallejo papers in the Bancroft Library.

Pío Pico, the last Mexican governor of California, delighted in playing the part of Bato, the chief shepherd. The Vallejos, even as adults, loved to take part. But the old general recalled in the 1880's that the player who got the most applause was Jacinto Rodríguez. Rodríguez took his part seriously. He would walk along the rugged Sonoma

County coast rehearsing against the roar of the waves. He enhanced his *rôle* with fearful shouts and crazy gestures. Young boys hid in the brush, enthralled this special "private" performance.

The *piñata* ceremony remains a favorite at Christmastide, usually connected with the *Las Posadas* celebrations. The blindfolded children were given long sticks for breaking the thin pottery shell in the form of a multicolored animal. A good hit was scored, and the *piñata* showered cactus candies and tiny gifts on the children.

CMSA is very much like a *piñata* to which we all bring the gifts of our individual interests and researches. Placed together in the colorful terra cotta shell, we gather to celebrate a shower of abundance through our publications, sponsored activities and annual meetings.

I look forward to seeing you all at *Mission San Luis Rey de Francia* at the end of February.

In the meantime, I wish you *¡Feliz Navidad!*

Dan Krieger
President, CMSA

California Mission Studies Association Launches Re-newed Website

With continued dedication to the study and preservation of the California Missions, presidios, pueblos, ranchos and their Native American, Hispanic and Early American past, the Board of Directors of CMSA is pleased to announce the launch of a newly redesigned website. Please take a few minutes to review the site, and if you'd like, provide Board Members feedback and or suggestions for improvement..

Click here to go to the re-newed site [CMSA Website](#)

For More Information About the California Mission Studies 2010 Annual Conference and to Register

Click Hear: [2010 Conference](#)

FROM THE EDITOR OF THE BOLETÍN

Style Guide for Print Publications

Revised by Editor Julianne Burton-Carvajal, December 2009

TEXT

Submit your text in Microsoft Word, using Times New Roman 12-point font, and following either the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the University of Chicago/Turabian style manual. Please do *not* insert any double spaces between sentences or after colons; *use single-spacing only throughout*. Also, please use *endnotes rather than footnotes*, and only for points of substance. Insert bibliographical citations parenthetically within the text: (author, year if needed: page number/s) and consolidate bibliographical references in a *List of Sources* at the end of your text. Finally, append a brief *About the Author*, and a numbered *List*

of Illustrations, with full credits and, if appropriate, captions.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations should be labeled Figure 1-15 and keyed to your text. "Images" include paintings and photographs; "graphics" include maps and site plans. Images should be scanned at between 300 and 600 DPI and submitted in either Tif or J-peg. Graphics should be submitted in EPS (Illustrator Program); Tif and J-peg are acceptable alternatives. On the advice of our printer, we cannot accept PDFs. If the number of images and graphics warrant, either submit them on CD to the address above, or request the printer's FTP site from the Editor.

Please note that securing permission to publish as well as payment of any required fees are the author's sole responsibility. Send a hard copy of written confirmation to the Editor, along with evidence of any attempt(s) to secure permission(s) that proved unsuccessful.

Submissions should be e-mailed as an attachment to julianne@ucsc.edu Every effort will be made to make a decision within 10 days of receipt.

Authors of *accepted* submissions should mail CD with illustrations to:

Julianne Burton- Carvajal
925 Monterey Circle
Monterey, CA 93940

Please label your CD clearly and mark "CMSA" in the lower left corner of the mailing envelope.

REMINDER

Logo

AS 2009 draws to a close, remember to renew your CMSA membership. In order to receive the *Boletin* and *Correo* in 2010 and obtain the member's discount for the 2010 Conference, you must have a re-newed membership on file with CMSA. Renewals may be made by

Events of Interest

The Academy of American Franciscan History and Mission Dolores will sponsor a lecture on Saturday, February 6, 2010 at 2pm at Mission Dolores Chapel in San Francisco. Quincy Newell, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Wyoming will lecture on her new book on Mission Dolores.

Constructing Lives at Mission San Francisco: Native Californians and Hispanic Colonists, 1776-1821. (University of New Mexico Press, 2009). Dr. Kent Lightfoot of UC Berkeley will comment. A reception will follow. For more information go to the Academy website at aafh.org .

Publication of Interest

Timeline Cover

The California Missions' Timeline (1768-1853) begins with the 1768 planning for the land and sea-based expedition to settle Alta California and covers all of the key events through 1853, when Archbishop Alemany filed a petition for the return of former mission lands. To make the story more visually interesting it includes eleven drawings of key historical events, colorized versions of drawings done by A.B. Dodge and Alexander Harmer. The

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timeline also includes a map showing the location of all of the missions, presidios and pueblos, and a special page detailing what happened to each of the missions after secularization. The timeline measures 6.5" wide x 7.25" tall and unfolds to six panels, printed on both sides. The timeline retails for \$8.95.

A poster version, *California History - The Mission Era*, developed for classroom and library use, measures 40" wide by 27" tall. It is laminated on both sides and has small eyelets in each corner to facilitate display. It sells for \$19.95.

As a member of CMSA, you can receive free shipping and direct billing for either of these publications and/or *The California Mission Source Book* by faxing your order to **480-443-8300** Atten: David. You must identify yourself as a CMSA member.

Orders may also be placed on-line at

[California Missions Resource Center](#) or
[Pentacle Press](#)

Shipping charges will be applied to on-line sales.

Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,

Louis Sanna
California Mission Studies Association