



The missions are California's cultural treasures. Working together we can ensure their future.

California Missions Foundation

February/March 2011

Latest News from California Missions Foundation

Dear Friends,

In this newsletter, we visit Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo. Founded in 1771 in Carmel, the mission is now undergoing a multimillion dollar restoration project. [Read below](#) to learn more about the mission, and to find out how CMF is helping preserve this piece of California history.

I would also like to share [this story](#) from the Humboldt Beacon newspaper, about an elementary school class in Hydesville that recently completed a project in which they researched and built models of all 21 of California's historic missions. We salute teacher Alita Sutherland for encouraging her students to develop an interest in preserving these cultural treasures.

The Humboldt BEACON
THE EEL RIVER VALLEY NEWS WEEKLY

Hydesville Elementary completes Mission project 21 California missions on display at C. Crane Company
Humboldt Beacon
Posted: 02/23/2011 02:26:01 PM PST

The fourth grade class of Hydesville Elementary recently completed a project on the California Missions including making models of each of the missions. On display for public viewing, their project can be viewed till Feb. 28 in the windows of C. Crane Company at 1001 Main Street, Fortuna.

Alita Sutherland is their teacher and explained that students chose a mission, researched the history, wrote a report, drew pictures and maps, and made a model for their project. There are 21 missions that are situated along the El Camino Real extending as far north as Sonoma. All the buildings were in disrepair or ruins and all have been restored as historically accurate as possible.

Click photo to enlarge

Click to read the full story from the Humboldt Beacon.

As always, please feel free to [share this email with a friend](#). And, to learn more about CMF's efforts to preserve California's 21 missions, please [visit our website](#) or [check out our Facebook page](#).

Finally, if you have questions, comments, or ideas for topics you'd like us to address in future



-Knox

Dr. Knox Mellon
Executive Director
California Missions Foundation

P.S. -- I'm also happy to announce that CMF now has the ability to accept donations via credit card. We hope to have this convenient feature on our website soon. (Stay tuned for updates in future newsletters.) In the meantime, if you would like to make a tax-deductible, charitable contribution to CMF using your credit card, please call our Associate Director, Carlotta Mellon, at 831.622.7500.

Featured Mission: Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo

This month, we're profiling Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo, located in Carmel, California. ([MAP](#))

HISTORY

The second oldest mission in the state, Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo was founded on June 3, 1770, by Father Junipero Serra at Presidio of Monterey. It was moved to Carmel the following year. The mission is named for St. Charles, a 16th century Cardinal.

Construction of the present church -- the seventh -- was begun in 1793 under Father Lasuén, and the church was dedicated in 1797. The Carmel Mission served as Father Serra's headquarters for Alta California mission operations until 1803. From this location, personnel and supplies were sent throughout the Spanish territory of Alta California, making the mission key to Spain's colonization efforts.



Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo



Mission Carmel circa 1880

When Mexico gained its independence in 1821, Alta California became a part of Mexico. In 1834, the missions were closed and the land was distributed to people who held influence with the new Mexican government. Following this "secularization," the Carmel Mission -- like so many others -- fell into disrepair. Many of the mission's adobe building began to disappear, and even the stone church (one of the few California mission churches to be constructed of stone) began to crumble. The photo at left shows the mission in the early 1880s. The missing roof is the most obvious sign of deterioration.

The U.S. gained control of the territory in 1848, and California entered the union as the 31st state in 1850. The mission lands were returned to the Catholic Church in 1859, and the Carmel Mission underwent its first restoration in 1884. A pointed Gothic roof was added to the basilica at that time. Subsequent restorations took place in 1924 and the early 1930s. The current (historically accurate) roof dates from 1936.

In 1960, Pope John XXIII designated the mission church a Minor Basilica.

Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo is designated as a National Historic Landmark. It appears on the National Register of Historic Places as California State Landmark #135.

The photos below show an exterior view of the mission from the early 1880s and at present.



(Left to right) Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Rio Carmelo circa 1880 and today

CURRENT PRESERVATION EFFORTS



Detail view of crumbling wall

With the last restoration work completed over 70 years ago, the Carmel Mission is again in need of major structural and cosmetic repair. The Basilica's massive stone walls have cracks and flaking, and the wood lintels and roof framing are severely deteriorated in several places.

A major study was conducted in 2008, resulting in recommendations for a multi-year, multimillion dollar restoration project. The work will include seismic retrofitting, reinforcing the roof, replacing the clay roofing tiles, installing a fire suppression system, and making upgrades to the plumbing, heating, and electrical systems.

You can [visit the Carmel Mission Foundation's website](#) for more details on the planned restoration work.

Through the efforts of the California Missions Foundation, the Carmel Mission has received a \$650,000 grant from the National Parks Service's Save America's Treasures (SAT) program, which will be of immense assistance in completing the necessary work. However, this SAT grant requires the Carmel Mission Foundation to match the funds with grants or donations from other sources.

On Feb. 17, CMF was pleased to present a check for \$35,000 to the Carmel Mission Foundation, representing half of a \$70,000 Hearst Foundation grant that will go toward matching the SAT grant.

"Here in Carmel we have been working diligently for the past few years to raise the necessary funds to keep this 1797 building safe and secure, and we are grateful for the heartwarming support of the Hearst Foundation and The California Missions Foundation," said Sam Wright, president of the Carmel Mission Foundation.



Sam Wright of the Carmel Mission Foundation accepts a check from CMF's Knox Mellon.

You can read more about the Hearst Foundation grant in [this article](#) from KSBW.com:

Carmel Mission Receives \$70,000 Grant

Funds Match \$650K Grant To Restore Mission

POSTED: 11:41 am PST February 18, 2011



Enlarge

Thanks to a grant from the California Missions Foundation funded by the Hearst Foundation, the Carmel Mission Foundation now has an additional \$70,000 to go toward a multimillion dollar restoration project.

The funding comes from the Hearst Foundation comes as a matching grant to be used in conjunction with a

\$650,000 grant the Carmel Mission Foundation received through the National Parks Service's Save America's Treasures program.

"We are pleased to be able to help the Carmel Mission Foundation with this SAT match to preserve the mission's history," said Dr. Kn...

Click to read the full story at KSBW.com.

Meet Sam Wright, President of the Carmel Mission Foundation



*Carmel Mission Foundation
President Sam Wright*

We recently spoke with Samuel Wright, one of the founding officers of the Carmel Mission Foundation, as well as its current President and Board Chair.

Sam's ties to the Carmel Mission go back a long way. Sam's mother moved to Carmel, a few blocks from the mission, in 1958. Her home is still in the family, and her memorial service was held at the mission.

A Stanford graduate, Sam has lived and worked on the Central Coast his entire life. He has sung in the Carmel Mission Choir for 20 years. He was the first Chairman of the Carmel Mission Parish Finance Council. He owns and operates Wright & Company Realtors, a brokerage, investments, and property management firm. Among many other philanthropic activities, he was a former Director and Chairman of the Development Committee at the Carmel Public

Library Foundation.

Here's what Sam had to say about his own interest in the Carmel Mission, as well as the mission's importance to the community.

Q: What was it that first interested you about the mission?

A: As an avid reader and collector of historic texts, I am deeply interested in California history. I think of the missions both as things of beauty and as pivotally significant in our heritage as Californians.

Q: You've written a book about the history of the mission's bells. What makes the bells such a crucial portion of the mission's story?

A: The bells in a way parallel the history of the mission itself. They were installed when the mission was

founded and flourishing, lost and dispersed during its abandonment, and then rediscovered and restored. The story of Ave Maria, "The Lost Bell," is particularly compelling.

Q: What do you wish that more people knew about the Carmel Mission?

A: The greater community needs to understand the mission both in its historical sense and its present value as an integral part of our cultural, religious, and economic fabric. Our challenge, beyond restoring the mission, is to be an educational enterprise. The mission has a major story or stories to tell, and we plan -- through our lectures, tours, and museum development -- to further articulate them.

Other News

On Saturday, February 26th, CMF Executive Director Knox Mellon and Associate Director for Marketing, Development and Operations Carlotta Mellon participated in a panel discussion at the annual conference of the California Mission Studies Association, entitled "The Mission to Save Missions." They were joined by Anthea Hartig, Regional Director, Western Region, National Trust for Historic Preservation; Wayne Donaldson, State Historic Preservation Officer for California; and John Foster, a preservation architect with Greenwood-Associates.

We are always pleased to see the breadth of interest in California's missions, and we are thrilled to meet and interact with others who share our commitment to their preservation.



How can you help to preserve California's historic missions?

Learn about ways you can donate!



About California Missions Foundation

Nothing defines California's heritage as significantly or emotionally as do the 21 missions that were founded along the coast from San Diego to Sonoma. Their beauty, stature and character underlie the formation of California. All 21 missions are California Historical Landmarks; many have also been designated National Historic Landmarks. The missions are among the most popular tourist destinations in the state, attracting millions of visitors each year.

Founded in 1998, the California Missions Foundation was established with the objective of preserving and protecting the missions. The Foundation is the only organization dedicated to the long-term preservation and restoration needs of all California missions and their associated historic and cultural resources for public benefit.

Visit us online at www.californiamissionsfoundation.org.

