



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



California Missions Foundation

Feb. 2012

Latest News from California Missions Foundation

Dear Friends,

2012 is well underway, and as with each new year, with it comes progress and a renewed sense of purpose.

In this edition of our newsletter, you'll find information about the California Mission Studies Association's annual conference, held this week from February 17-19 at Mission Arcangel, San Rafael. The event will offer panel discussions, lectures, historical tours of local sites and an awards ceremony honoring those who have made significant contributions to the preservation and legacy of California's missions. [Please read on for more information](#) about the conference, which will be an excellent opportunity to find out more about the work going on throughout the state, and to enjoy the natural beauty that draws visitors to the San Francisco Bay Area from across the globe.

We also have a report on the Santa Barbara Mission Museum's [Huerta Gardens project](#), written by Museum Director Kristina Foss. The project, which began in 1999, seeks to restore the gardens as they would have been between 1769 and 1834, using the same plants and vegetation as were grown during that time.

We are also pleased to announce that 2011 was a banner year for the California Missions Foundation, as revenues exceeded \$1,000,000. This was its best year ever in its twelve year history, thanks in part to a bequest that provides significant dollars for much need preservation, restoration and art conservation at Mission Dolores in San Francisco. *Save America's Treasures* grants for projects at Missions San Luis Rey, Carmel and Santa Barbara also were significant, while donations from foundations and individuals funded important projects at Missions San Antonio de Padua, San Juan Bautista, and San Miguel.

As always, please feel free to [share this email with a friend](#). And if you have questions, comments, or ideas for topics you'd like us to address in future newsletters, please don't hesitate to reply to this email. We love hearing from you!



-Knox

Dr. Knox Mellon
Executive Director
California Missions Foundation

Mission San Rafael Hosts the California Mission Studies Association's Annual Conference, February 17-19

The California Mission Studies Association will hold its annual conference at Mission San Rafael Arcangel February 17 - 19, 2012.

"We are very excited to be holding our event at the San Rafael mission, and to be able to visit other historic sites in the area," said David Bolton, CMSA Board President. "The event is open to the public and the registration cost is reasonable, so we hope to see history buffs, teachers and others join us for the event," he added.



Mission San Rafael

The conference will feature a panel discussion on the culture of the coast Miwok Indians who lived in Marin and the North Bay before the Spanish

settlement, and will conclude with a presentation of the Norman Neuerburg and Edna Kimbro Awards at the Embassy Suites San Rafael. CMSA members Kent Lightfoot and Bill Fairbanks have been selected as recipients of the 2012 Norman Neuerburg and Edna Kimbro Awards respectively.

The Friday keynote address "Re-envisioning Spanish Missions in an Indigenous Landscape" will be given by Dr. Lee Panich, Santa Clara University and Dr. Tsim Schneider, University of California, Berkeley. Panich and Schneider will consider ways that Spanish missions were incorporated into existing indigenous cultural landscapes.

San Rafael's mission was founded in 1817 and destroyed after it fell into disuse. The current structure is a replica constructed in 1949 on the site of the original mission. It is a functioning Catholic church and affiliated with Saint Raphael Church.

Mission San Rafael Arcangel Preservation Foundation holds regular lectures on the history of the mission and conducts regular tours. There is also a gift shop attached to the mission.

The association has appointed a local committee to plan the event. The planning committee is chaired by Theresa Brunner, curator for the Mission San Rafael Arcangel Preservation Foundation. Other members are Nick Tipon, a member of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, and Andre Shashaty, president of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. Honorary conference chair is Fr. John Balleza, pastor of Saint Raphael Church.

For information on the conference, please [visit the conference site](#). To find out more about Mission San Rafael please [click here](#) or call Theresa Brunner, 415-454-8141.

Mission Museum Project Restores Huerta Gardens

By Museum Director Kristina Foss

In 1999, the Mission Museum started an effort to locate, preserve and disseminate plants of the Mission Era from 1769-1834. Plants collected from early Mission and rancho sites by Museum Director Kristina Foss and Santa Barbara City College Environmental Horticulture Chair Jerry Sortomme were planted in a holding area at the Mission. Michael Hardwick took on the enormous task of researching Mission era horticulture. We sought to identify and document the authentic horticultural variety of the California Missions. Hardwick's book "Changes in Landscape: the Beginnings of Horticulture in the California Missions" was the result. With a growing list of plants, it was now a challenge to both find the correct varieties and to secure a space in which they could flourish.

By the 21st century, very little remained of the original mission era plant stock. By 1950 only three olive trees were alive at Mission San Diego down from two orchards of 467 trees in 1839. Native Californians had tended the gardens and in secularization had been displaced, so the fields and orchards were not tended. Fray Font had described Father Palou's Carmel garden as planted with cauliflower, lettuce, artichokes, herbs and later with carrots, beets, squash, pumpkins, onions, garlic, peppers and potatoes.

Olive orchards and vineyards were common. Where and how would we find them all today? Then we found a partner in the California Missions Foundation (CMF).

In 2003, the project expanded with the support of the California Missions Foundation. Consultant funds allowed the Museum to engage retired professor Jerry Sortomme to manage the garden. The Franciscan Guardian allowed the project new space and the garden was expanded from a small patch to nearly an acre of land. Volunteer gardeners ("the Huerta Folk") grew in number from one (Chumash descendant Ernie Pico who cared for the plants in those first 4 years) to over 25. The garden stock began to grow.

The plant search and nurturing has been fascinating, and has brought scholars, gardeners and schoolchildren together in a variety of ways. Today, the educational role of the garden is growing. Both student and adult docent tours occur weekly. A partnership with the County schools gardens project in primary grades brings students to an extended tour of educational stations within the garden. Here they learn of Native plant uses, plant and save seeds, compost, learn about Mission era garden plants, use cochineal to paint a design to take home, and taste from the garden. There is a waiting list for the program. This would not be possible without the ADA access pathways funded by the CMF and grants from the Sisters of St. Francis and from the Paula Hardwick Memorial Fund.



Volunteer gardeners ("The Huerta Folk") dig up the soil in preparation for planting.



The gardens offer an opportunity for young people to learn about the history of California.

Through the efforts of scholars, scout troops, community volunteers, Franciscans, Native American community members, Los Prietos Boys Camp county juvenile facility crews, Mission docents, and CMF the Huerta has become a success.

The Mission Museum's Huerta Historic Garden has become both a authentic plant "mother bed" and an educational resource, a prototype for other missions and historic sites. We invite anyone interested in this work and/or wanting to restore the cultural landscape at their site to [contact us](#) for any help we can provide.

You can help us to preserve California's historic missions and all their cultural treasures!

Call our office at (831) 622-7500 to donate by credit card, or click the button below to [donate via](#)

[PayPal!](#)



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 statewide 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.

