

# Ynformes de Sn. Jn. Bautista

Dedicated to the Preservation of Our Mission's Historical Resources



A Report of the Mission Conservation Program of San Juan Bautista, California – Volume 1, Number 6 – September 29, 2006

## The Mission Archives

By Ruben G. Mendoza, Project Manager

Our long-term effort to rehabilitate the Old Mission Archives Room has finally come to fruition. This past summer the SJB Mission Conservation Program project prioritized the construction of new cabinetry and the cataloguing of all existing Archives Room collections. With the assistance of curatorial assistants Adrian Lopez and Shari Harder, all books from the collections were entered into the database, barcoded, and set into an archival bookcase replete with foil-back shelf liner to protect the collections from moisture, mold, and pest damage. In addition, so as to minimize pest damage, all areas containing historic materials now include pest abatement so as to minimize damage from silver fish and bookworms. The Archives Room is now equipped with both a “mold zapper” and a state of the art air purification system for controlling the environment in that room. These latter devices should go far to improve the climate within the Archives Room for both the purposes of conservation and visitor comfort.

During one particularly challenging week this past summer, curatorial assistant Shari Harder catalogued and bar-coded some 200 books, which is but a small part of the over 1,500 specimens that now make up the Archives Library Database of historic resources. The Museum database, by contrast, now contains a searchable index of some 3,000 individual items...all of which are now barcoded and catalogued...and searchable by keywords and names. In addition, Project volunteer Carla Hendershot continued work on enclosing an unprotected portion of the historic photographs collection in Mylar sheets, a task that she reinitiated at the top of the summer and continues to this day. Carla originally began this process back in the 1980s in concert with California missions' scholar Norman Neuerburg in their respective efforts to create a partial inventory of the Old Mission's collections of that time. Sadly, quite a number of items from that earlier cataloging effort no longer reside at the Old Mission. Nevertheless, the newly renovated Archives Room environment, with its newly catalogued, barcoded, and treated collections should stand the test of time for years to come.



The new Mission Archives bookcase is fabricated from archivally-stable Medex plywood so as to insure the long-term conservation of the Old Mission's collections. Photo © Ruben G. Mendoza, 2006.

## Guidelines for Archival Access

As the saying goes, “build it, and they will come!” Ironically, no sooner than we completed the initial development of the Archives Library Catalog, the Old Mission was contacted by several scholars, including a doctoral student seeking access to such materials as the hymnals and related music collections, as well as historic documents pertaining to genealogical research. At about the same time, I'd had the opportunity to meet with our famously generous benefactor, and Knox Mellon of the California Missions Foundation...the organization that coordinates contributions to the SJB Mission Conservation Program. Each expressed concerns about the long-term maintenance and conservation of the Old Mission Museum and Archives Room. So as to assure that future generations will prioritize the care of the Old Mission's historic collections, a conservation fund was established within the parish account for the purposes of creating a dedicated account for the conservation efforts in question. In addition, I drafted preliminary guidelines and conditions for Archives Room access.

So that we might best protect our community's valued historical resources, and at the same time generate funds to cover the costs of provisioning access, the following access fees and guidelines have been put into effect:

- Any and all access to the Archives Room must be scheduled in advance and by appointment.
- Access will require that a brief summary of the nature of your research be specified in writing in advance.
- Access will require a \$30.00 per hour (\$100 minimum per day) fee to cover the costs of assigning a staff member to the Archives Room for the duration of the visitor's study.
- If the visitor would like to request a computerized keywords-based Records Search of the Archives Room collection in advance, the Search fee stands at \$120.00. A Rapid Request for an expedited search of the database stands at \$175.00 per search.
- A curatorial assistant or parish staff member must be available and present for the duration of the visitors study in the Archives Room.
- The handling of all historic materials and documents will be conducted by the curatorial assistant with the use of archival gloves and materials.
- Where digital photographs or photocopies of materials are requested by the researcher, this shall be conducted by the curatorial assistant or project manager on an as needed basis and by way of nominal compensation to the conservation fund.
- Where publication of digitized photographic materials is the intended outcome of study or research, the Old Mission requires that a fee of \$65.00 per digitized image be paid in advance of publication.
- Publication of Old Mission materials is understood to entail one-time, non-exclusive use; and any and all copyrights remain with Old Mission San Juan Bautista and Diocese of Monterey.
- Finally, any and all use of SJB Archives Room or Museum images or collections requires that two copies of the publication in which said materials appear will be donated to the Old Mission for the purposes of building on the Archives Room collection.

*For further information regarding access to the Old Mission's Archives Room, please contact 831.623.2127, or email SJB Mission Conservation Program Project Manager Ruben Mendoza at [ruben\\_mendoza@csumb.edu](mailto:ruben_mendoza@csumb.edu).*



Project intern Anne Mrozielski holds a barcoded *chocolatero*, or copper chocolate mug located in the Mission Refectory. Photo © Ruben G. Mendoza, 2006.

### **Viva la France!**

For two weeks of the month of July 2006, the SJB Mission Conservation Program hosted a conservation volunteer from the prestigious Ecole de Condé in Paris, France. Anne Mrozielski, an art conservator in training, volunteered two weeks of her summer for an internship with the Old Mission's conservation program. During that time, Anne assisted with the cataloguing and barcoding of the colonial era paintings of the Guadalupe Chapel, and the measurement and description of paintings located in the Mission Church. In addition, Anne assisted with the ongoing development of the Archives Room catalog and the barcoding of catalogued specimens.



Anne Mrozielski, of the *Ecole de Condé* School of Art Restoration in Paris, props a painting of Mary Magdalene. Photo © Ruben G. Mendoza, 2006.