



March 4, 2016

What a treat! **CHUCK WARD** arranged for our club to meet at the Old Mission San Luis Rey for lunch and a tour of the recent improvements that have been made at the Old Mission Museum.



Lunch in the Mission dining room was wonderful! It included an amazing salad with all the ‘fixins’, homemade lasagna, bean soup, bread, home-made cookies and even “enhanced” water! This reporter was impressed. We were joined by many of the Franciscans and employees of the Mission for lunch.

CHUCK introduced two of his guests, **Jim & Brenda Leatherwood**, from Riverside. They recently bought a home in Oceanside so they will be splitting themselves between two homes. “Welcome to Oceanside – and Rotary!” (Gee, that sounds like the beginning of a song we all know, but alas, there were no songs at this particular meeting.) Also seen in the group were **LES NEWQUIST’s** wife **Cricket**, **FRANK COXON’s** wife **Mary** and **SUSAN BROWN’s** guest **Susan Murphy** (love the fact we’ve seen her back again!). Visiting Rotarian **GARY HOLT** was also there. Welcome to all! **Those were all I saw – did anyone else note any I’m missing?**



CHUCK then took the opportunity to introduce **Brother Chris Best** to our group. **Brother Chris** has been at the Mission for four years now, and is the Director of the Museum and Visitors. He was born in San Francisco and graduated from the University of Santa Clara. He joined the Franciscans about twelve years ago after working in the fields of horticulture and occupational therapy.



Brother Chris started our tour in the Agapito Court. Located on the side of the main church, the courtyard is named in honor of Agapito Amamix who lived from 1820-1837. He was a Native American from the Mission San Luis Rey, who along with Pablo Tac, traveled to Rome with Father Peyri in 1822 and studied at the Urban College. Agapito died shortly after he got to Italy.

The courtyard had been repaired and beautified quite a bit since this reporter was last there. The wisteria were in beautiful full bloom and the fragrance was amazing. **JIM**



SCHRODER recalled that when he was a child, there were messy banana trees along the wall of the church. Evidence of those trees was long gone.

Father David Gaa, whom many of us have met, was responsible for the redo of the Agapito Court.



The following facts were gleaned from the talk by **Brother Chris** as we meandered through the Museum. It was a wonderful tour, and I would highly recommend anyone interested should contact **Brother Chris** at the Mission and see what could be arranged for another tour.

Father Peyri had a good relationship with the Luiseño Indians. When he left the Mission, it wasn't by choice – and it was under duress. There had been a long and bloody war between Mexico and Spain. Mexico had won the war and set up an idealistic government, but the government was centered in Mexico City which was a long distance away. It was difficult to effectively rule from so far and the situation soon went bad. The Mexican government wanted Father Peyri to pledge an oath of allegiance to them. He wouldn't do that. He wanted to give the power back to the Luiseno Indians, but that was not meant to be. After ten years, the Mexican government took over and the Indians lost out. Father Peyri then went to Italy and made dictionaries of the Luiseno language, and included information and pictures about their life here.

About 80% of the California Indians died from illnesses brought to the area by the Spanish people in this “first contact.” It wasn't purposeful, but the Indians had never been exposed to these diseases and therefore had no immunities to them.

The Spaniards also brought good things with them, one of them being water knowledge. They came from part of Spain that dealt regularly with drought so they had a lot of knowledge in that field. They also brought with them the beginnings of the citrus, olive and grape fields as well as cattle and sheep which became a mainstay for this region.

While they were renovating the Agapito Courtyard, they worked with the Luiseno Indian tribe (who provided a monitor) to make sure no remains were being disturbed. None were found in their test diggings, so they were given permission by the tribe to dig and repair the fountains in the Courtyard. **Jack Williams** served as the archeologist at the digs and he made the report. The water used in the original fountains was pumped in from the San Luis Rey River, which is now basically underground.

The Mission was founded in 1798, but building did not begin until a number of years later because the Spaniards had to learn to communicate with and earn the trust of the locals

first. (Actually, **WARD O'DOHERTY** suggested it was because they had trouble getting permits from the City . . . ☺)

There were four main eras of the San Luis Rey Mission development: the Indian era (the Luiseno tribe), the Spanish era, the Mexican era and the American era.

During the Indian era they were able to cook in tightly woven baskets. They were so tightly woven that they were waterproof, so when water was put in it, they could add hot rocks, and eventually have boiling water. Baskets were used instead of pots because they were much easier and lighter to transport when the Luisenos moved their living spaces, which they did often. Twenty percent of their diet was of dishes made of acorns!

Pope Leo XIII decided there were too many groups of monks, priests, etc., all wearing different outfits, and he wanted to make them all more uniform so everyone could tell who they were. He dictated that the Franciscans should wear brown (and they were wool at the time). Examples of those habits were on display in the new portion of the museum.

The Franciscans at the Mission had to provide for themselves. They couldn't rely on Spain providing for their needs as Spain was involved in too many conflicts at the time. They traded things like leather and cloth (from their cattle and sheep) for more valuable things not available to them. The Spanish did bring with them most of their own books.

Father Peyri was from Pantalona near Barcelona, Spain. From his pictures we know he had red hair and blue eyes. He was about 30 years old when he came to the Mission and was here about 34 years.

There were always two friars at each Mission because they felt they needed company when they came into a totally different culture. Each Mission also had 5-10 soldiers to keep the peace and Mission SLR had 2-3,000 Indians at any given time. They were the biggest Mission church and they had the largest economy.

In 1812 a huge earthquake leveled the Mission in San Juan Capistrano and killed everyone there at Mass. They decided to leave the ruins there and never rebuilt, out of respect for the number of people killed there. The Mission SLR church was built in the shape of a cross, and the Mission SJC was the only other one built in that shape. Since that one was destroyed, the Mission SLR is the only one remaining.

Travelers were always welcome at the Mission as they made their way up and down the coast of California. Most travelers in those days were not nervous about staying with strangers and most people everywhere offered hospitality to people away from home.

There are many beautiful vestments on display in the museum. They were made from silk brought in from China. Mission SLR also traded with the Philippines, New York, Boston and England.

The Spanish wanted to make the Indians into full Spanish citizens. This would improve their numbers in the new country, they could be made to be soldiers to protect the land from invaders, and they could be taxed by Spain. At that time they were afraid the Russians would attack the coastal area as they already were in Alaska and were interested in further expansion. Missions also acted as forts.

The Mission was abandoned for about 45 years between 1840 and 1890. By the time they returned to reoccupy the building, there had been much damage (all that remained standing was the church itself) and much of the art had been lost.

Father O'Keefe was the second founder of the Mission. He had been a teacher at the Santa Barbara Mission. The Mission in Santa Barbara was the only Mission that never lost all their friars.

In the new area of the museum is the original document that was signed by Abraham Lincoln giving the Mission land back to the Catholic Church following the war between the Mexicans and the U.S. They had also had requested the Indian lands be returned, but that was not approved. Lincoln signed this document a few months before his death. Fifty six acres were given back to the Mission.

The tour ended in the Mission San Luis Rey gift shop at about 1:40 for me, but there were others still roaming through the museum and looking at the fascinating exhibits. It was a wonderful lunch, fantastic tour, and I think we owe a debt of gratitude to both **Brother Chris** for his interesting and informative talk, and to **CHUCK WARD** for arranging it.



ROTARIANS OUT AND ABOUT

Another Crown Height mentor project event took place on Saturday, with **DAVE NYDEGGER**, **SUSAN BROWN** and **JIM SCHRODER** accompanying middle schoolers on a tour of Camp Pendleton. **JIM** sent along a few photos to prove what a big hit **SUSAN** (and in particular, her convertible) was with the students. As **JIM** put it, “Guess who had the most popular car on Saturday??” (Can’t say as I blame the kids for that choice!)



COMING UP AT OCEANSIDE ROTARY

March 11 – MARK POWER, Big Brothers Big Sisters of SD County
Reporter: JIM SCHRODER

March 18 – Annual Military Awards meeting with Fallbrook Rotary
Reporter: LOLA SHERMAN

March 25 – DARK for Good Friday

April 1 – DAVID NYDEGGER, “Who am I’s and other Fun Stuff!”
Reporter: TBA

April 8 – TIM MORAN, CEO of TriCity Medical Center
Reporter: TBA

April 15 – COLLEEN FOSTER, City of Oceanside on “Green Oceanside”
Reporter: TBA

April 22 – DARK for Rotarians at Work weekend

April 23 – Rotarians at Work project at Heritage Park

April 29 – DAVE STEWART, Genentech
Reporter: TBA