



The INNsider



MISSION INN FOUNDATION & MUSEUM

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Coming Events:

Docent of the Year Nominations Due	Tuesday, February 28, 2006
All Docent Meeting 6PM—7PM	Tuesday, March 14, 2006
Docent Graduation/Volunteer Recognition	Tuesday, April 18, 2006

All Docent Meeting

Docents, mark your calendars. The semi-annual All Docent Meeting is planned for Tuesday, **March 14th**, 6:00 to 7:00 PM. That's right. The hour before docent training class. Yes, all you DITS, we want to see you there too.

This is your meeting. Meet and greet fellow docents. Catch up on what's going on. Bring your questions, ideas, stories . . . Be there.

Docent Council Application

Happy New Year! The holidays are behind us. A blank landscape lies ahead of us. What will we build on it? Now is the time to start thinking about becoming more involved. Would you be interested in serving on the Docent Council? Would you like to be part of the governing and policy-making body of the Docent Association? It may seem a bit early, the fiscal year starts July 1st . . . But we need to plan ahead. There will be several openings on the Council and we are looking for special people like you to fill them.

The Docent Council meets the second Monday of each month, at the Mission Inn from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. Council members make a commitment to serve for three years. If you are interested, please pick up an application at the Museum, complete and return it to Randi Brewer by **February 28**. Call Joyce Lyons, Council Chair, if you would like more information.

Steve Huffman — Director of Engineering

By Dauris Slaughter

To the delight of the Docents-in-Training, Steve Huffman, Director of Engineering, recently spoke to the group about his job and experiences. Steve started at the Inn in 1979. He said he wasn't an engineer, but the Inn had a need for his particular experience. He has worked his way up from a helper to Director.

He shared the following...**Then** and **Now**:

- **Then**, when he started at the Inn, typewriters and carbon paper were used.
- **Now**, there are 23 rack-mounted file servers, 93 desktops or laptops, 24 computer cash registers and over 500 network jacks.

- **Then**, there were no phones or TVs in rooms.
- **Now**, there are 2 phones in most rooms and will add another. There will be LCD televisions in all rooms within three years.

- **Then**, an extension cord was shared.
- **Now**, \$3.3M spent on energy and maintenance.

What It Takes

- 500 employees
- They do everything you do in your house, but mostly to a higher standard & multiplied by 500
- 17 Engineering and Grounds people, plus Steve and his assistant Tony
- 12 kinds of water: cold, soft, 120deg, 120deg soft, 140deg, 180deg, chilled, closed condenser, tower, heating, regular waste, and grease laden waste
- 400 heating and air conditioning units
- 117 electrical sub-panels
- Last month's electric bill was over \$50,000: Christmas lights included
- Last month's water bill over \$6,000
- Rain leaks in 68 places in 2005
- Termite treatments: 40 in 2003, 40 in 2004, 177 in 2005
- 466 open work orders: does urgent calls first
- 53 trouble calls in one day: peak day
- Four upcoming construction projects including major central plant work and room renovations
- Projects underway: spa expansion, garage painting, rooftop parking, thermostats, 20 A/C units, network infrastructure
- Completed in 2005: replace lobby air conditioning, additional music room air conditioning, room service office expansion, cafeteria remodel, 431 bathroom remodels, herb garden and exterior lighting

Biggest Challenge: Complexity

Least favorite things: intermittent problems, things that turn out to have been caused by our stupidity (Observing his department's smooth operation, this could only be a rarity!).

Interesting things through the years: Discovering things that are tied to Inn history both clever and crazy, mushrooms that grew in the Inn's shag carpet in the old days, three layers of concrete in one end of the swimming pool ...to make it shallower for insurance purposes.

The upper stories of annex building were dorms. Most rooms were in front....probably the men's, there is/was a fountain, courtyard and patio.

Steve gave a fascinating presentation filled with humor and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Thanks, Steve!!!

A Glimpse into the Past

Thanks to Dauris Slaughter for providing a wonderful “glimpse into the past.” On the following two pages you will find a letter written by DeWitt Hutchings to prospective bridegroom Robert Gordon, Jr. regarding wedding facilities at the Inn. The letter, dated September 29, 1939, outlines rooms available for weddings, including the Presidential Suite, The St. Cecilia Chapel, and the Chancel (Anyone know where that was?).

We have also been provided with Dinner & Luncheon menus. Some of the entrée’s are rather unusual such as “Baked Filet of Barracuda” and “Shirred Eggs with Lamb Kidney”. **Bon Appetite!**

Front Desk Manager, Elsie Carbajal

By Dauris Slaughter

The Mission Inn attracts such interesting and dedicated employees, it is a pleasure to meet and interview them. Another such person is Elsie Carbajal who has worked at the Inn for 8 ½ years. After meeting Elsie, it was no surprise to learn she is engaged to be married. However they have not set the date.

She is definitely a family person having grown up in Riverside with most of her family living here. She enjoys spending time with them, playing softball and playing poker every once in a while. While attending her brothers' baseball game, she met "Scorekeeper" Dorie alias Executive Secretary to the Inn's General Manager. Dorie encouraged her to apply for a position at the Inn, and was hired for the front desk.

Due to her length of time at the Inn and experience, she was later hired as Front Office Manager. No matter what her job entails Elsie wants to do well and knows it pays off. She encourages her staff to be proactive and always have their guests' comfort in mind. As the Inn prefers to promote from within, she strives to groom and motivate her staff for growth, knowing that hard work and dedication can make things happen for others as it did for her.

Elsie overlooks all front office operations, valet service, the front desk, bell desk, concierge, PBX and Ma-caws. Each of these departments has its own manager who reports to her. On any day she may become involved with rooms, valet, guest comments and concerns. She enjoys the challenge of solving guest concerns, not knowing what they may be and turning the situation around so that they leave happy. Elsie also arranges meetings, checks daily punch in-out cards and gives employee evaluations.

Her duties also involve various projects, computer upgrading, and dealing with the noises apparent in a hundred year-old hotel. As an example, When there is a wedding reception in the Music Room, attendees are given rooms over the Music Room. This is clever noise abatement!! After Elsie explained her duties, she said, "That's all I do," as if she wasn't an extremely busy and dedicated lady.

Sometimes the children of parents celebrating their 50th anniversary at the Inn, will call and ask which room their parents stayed in when they were married in the Inn, so they can reserve it for their parents. Guests from 50 years ago tell her they remember running around in the halls as youngsters. She is complimented when the guests remember her from past weddings and encounters. Elsie had a special smile when she said she appreciates their relationship.

Elsie feels there are many return guests who are like family. This also applies to the employees. They feel as if they are a team and when management is hired, they stay here. People love working at the Inn.

During President Bush's last visit to the Inn, he had an aide who assisted him with his needs. It was an extremely busy time as Elsie was on-call throughout his visit. She once was asked to purchase spray starch, so they could press his pants; Housekeeping was asked to launder his clothes after using the treadmill; He also requested a coffee canister to be able to make coffee in his suite; The President forgot his slippers, thus the Secret Service asked her to purchase a pair for him. How many people will be able to tell their grandchildren they were asked to purchase slippers for a President!

She shared it was difficult to leave the hotel and return due to the amount of the Secret Service staff throughout the hotel. She said they were long day, lots of work, and very interesting. There were many meetings for their needs. A different world! When famous guests stay at the Inn, many times she is not aware of it as they come in the back way for privacy, such as President Bush did.

It was a delight to meet Elsie and learn more about the workings of the Mission Inn. By the way, there is a rumor going around that she is one of the top managers in the Mission Inn and is well respected. The Mission Inn is indeed fortunate to have her as an employee.

Docent of the Year Nominations

If you know a Docent who you feel would be a good candidate for Docent of the Year, you are encouraged to submit a nomination to the attention of **Steve Spiller** at the Museum desk. The **deadline** for nominations is **February 28th**. Nominations must be in paragraph form, summarizing achievements and attributes of the Docent you are nominating. The nominees will be voted on at the March Docent Council meeting by secret ballot.

The Mission Inn Foundation & Museum Docent Association Policies and Procedures state that criteria for judging are as follows (it is recommended that no one guideline be considered more important than another):

1. Participation in tours in or around the Inn.
2. On-going activities such as:
 - INNSider Staff contribution
 - Docent Council membership and support
 - Docent committee work
 - School tours
3. Special projects such as:
 - Assisting with the Docent training program
 - Lecture presentations
 - Research Projects/Inventory
4. Consideration may also be given to:
 - General volunteers
 - Fill-ins for last minute no-shows and cancellations
 - Mission Inn 5/10K Run
 - Mission Inn Museum Assistants
 - Participation in Oral History Program
 - Participation in Education Programs

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Your membership support is essential to our purpose of preserving the unique collections of the Mission Inn and helping others to learn about this extraordinary site. We invite you to join us in supporting this historic landmark. Please remember that members are entitled to a free museum publication and a 10% savings on Museum Store purchases. We ask that all volunteers with the Mission Inn Foundation & Museum maintain a current membership. **We will continue to mail the INNSider to active docents and volunteers.** Membership is for a year from renewal date - \$15.00. Please send your check payable to the Mission Inn Foundation, 3696 Main Street, Riverside 92501. **Questions about your membership status? Call Virginia, (951) 781-8241** Also please review your mailing label for accuracy. Include any necessary changes. **THANK YOU!**

Name:	
Address:	
City/Zip:	
Phone:	E-mail:

Mission Inn Foundation - Mission Statement

The Mission Inn Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the public trust in the Mission Inn, a privately-owned National Historic Landmark hotel in Riverside, California. The Foundation interprets and promotes the cultural and social significance of the Inn and its collection within the context of local, regional and national history.

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The INNSider Volunteer Newsletter
Mission Inn Foundation & Museum
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9:30 am to 4:00 pm
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