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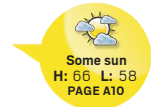
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CARMEL MISSION FOUNDATION

\$4M restoration completed

By James Herrera

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CARMEL » In time for the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Carmel Mission, the \$4 million Downie Museum and Basilica Forecourt project and restoration work on the grounds of the site have been completed, the third major restoration by the Carmel Mission Foundation.

In early August, Carmel Mission Foundation Executive Director Stephanie Zelei announced the full funding of the project and said it would be completed before the mission's founding anniversary.

"This final portion of the project came in under budget and ahead of schedule due to the tremendous contributions of SRA Project Management, Hathaway

Dinwiddie Construction Company, Franks & Brenkwitz Architecture, Cornerstone Masonry, Graniterock, Searle Electric, Green Valley Landscaping, Val's Plumbing and Chris Ingram Plastering," said Zelei in a press release. "We want to thank the parish and diocese for their support during construction while adhering to the challenging COVID

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The Carmel Mission Foundation has completed the \$4 million Downie Museum adobe and Basilica Forecourt Restoration Project ahead of the 250th anniversary of the founding of La Misión San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo.

MANNY ESPINOZA — CARMEL MISSION FOUNDATION

\$4M

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safe protocols needed for the continued mission operations. The project looks fantastic, and we hope everyone will find time to visit the property.”

The century-old Downie Museum adobe and the Basilica Forecourt were in serious need of restoration. The project covered seismically strengthening, restoring and preserving the 100-year-old adobe structure, increasing the museum interior exhibit space, adding Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible restrooms, remedying flooding and draining issues affecting the basilica, and providing Americans with Disabilities Act access throughout the garden and museum. The goal was to complete the project in time for the 250th anniversary of the founding of La Misión San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo.

The Downie Museum adobe was commissioned in 1919, and the 1,157-square-foot building was completed in 1921 as quarters for visiting

priests. It was dedicated as a museum in 1980 to honor Sir Harry Downie, who spent 50 years as the Carmel Mission’s restorer.

With the successful restoration of the adobe’s roofline, fireplace and wood support beams, it is now safe, accessible and preserved for the future.

The Carmel Mission Basilica Forecourt is a 6,800-square-foot area outside the Downie Museum adobe that had remained untouched since 1936. It is the main entrance courtyard to the basilica and museums. It required accessibility upgrades, drainage solutions, grading and paving.

In August 2020, the front perimeter wall crumbled. It has been rebuilt, the entrance gates refurbished, and a new gated pedestrian entrance added alongside the museum store, providing more viewing areas from Rio Road.

Flooding and drainage issues affecting the foundation of the bell tower that dates back to 1797 have been remedied, and the historic fountain is now functional.

The Carmel Mission Foundation marks the

third major restoration project it has completed since its inception in 2008, following the basilica’s structural restoration in 2013, and the central courtyard in 2016, which offers an updated outdoor gathering space for the parish and museum for use during the ongoing pandemic and ensuing COVID-19 operational restrictions.

The foundation is committed to the interest of continuing the important restoration work on the many historic structures, museums and artifacts.

For the past 13 years, the Carmel Mission Foundation, along with a community of donors and volunteers, has raised and funded about \$14 million into the research and restoration needs of the historic structures, grounds and artifacts of the 22-acre Carmel Mission complex.

The foundation will now focus on sharing the story of the mission property now that the latest major restoration project is complete including the first 60 years of early mission life and the following 175 years when the U.S. took over the ruins of the

Carmel Mission.

Zelei said the community has practiced a legacy of joining together in restoring this national historic landmark as the Monterey Peninsula developed around it, adding that it is an exciting time and the foundation wants to share the incredible history of the mission.

Individual plaques will be placed in the forecourt and in the Downie Museum to honor the two major donors who contributed \$1.5 million and greater to the foundation for this restoration project. Donors who contributed \$5,000 and greater will be recognized with a plaque in the Carmel Mission’s Central Courtyard.

The Carmel Mission Foundation will be showcasing before and after images of the project, history videos and restoration progress videos through the foundation website and social media pages over the next few months at <https://www.facebook.com/CarmelMissionFoundation/videos/157641639878168/>.

For more information about the project call 831-624-3261 or go to carmel-missionfoundation.org.