

Santa Barbara Historical Museum's

La Fiesta del Museo



By **RICHARD** and **AMANDA PAYATT**
Special to CASA

IN THE COOL CLEAR LIGHT of a perfect Santa Barbara evening, the Santa Barbara Historical Museum held its annual Fiesta kickoff party, *La Fiesta del Museo*. This gathering has long been a favorite for the Fiesta's executive team, patrons of the museum, and fans and friends of the Fiesta itself. The setting in the museum's romantic courtyard could not have been better. And the party...?

They did it again! The Museum made this year's Fiesta del Museo even better than the last one. With brilliant planning and the creativity of Museum Trustee and event chair, Leslie L. Hovey and her dedicated committee, the bar has been raised again.

The courtyard was festooned with strings of old fashioned lights and colored floods cast a romantic glow against the Museum's adobe walls throughout the evening; all thanks to the generosity of and donated by Trevor Zellet of Santa Barbara's own Bella Vista Designs. The sophisticated decorations were kept simple, and in a muted Fiesta pallet. So much the better, as it allowed the costumes and jewelry of the Fiesta crowd to shine all the more. The dresses were dazzling. The men's jackets were dashing. More than a few gorgeous vintage pieces were out on the dance floor. One stand out was the Fiesta suit of famous former El Presidente Sam Stamwood, which arrived on the shoulders of Erik Davis. Erik was not only lucky to find this treasure at the Fiesta Costume sale at the Carriage Museum, he was even luckier to find that it fits him perfectly. Tim Taylor, this year's El Presidente, was also looking quite handsome as well-wishers and friends surrounded him all evening.



David Bisol, Executive Director

Following tradition, the evening began with performances by the Spirit of Fiesta, and the Junior Spirit of Fiesta. This year's Junior Spirit, Ashley Almada, was poised

and natural. She didn't seem to be performing, as much as really enjoying the dance. Just charming!



Leslie Hovey, Event Chairman with Junior Spirit, **Ashley Almada**



Janet & Edgar Sands, President of the Board of Trustees

Then the crowd was treated to the sassy moves of the Spirit, Jessica Marquez, whose dancing was as electric as her spectacular blue dress. This young woman really knows how to use her hands and her scarf! Moreover, it is impossible to take a bad picture of this lovely lady.

The food this year was also a standout. Catering was by the Hitching Post, famous for its California Ranchero style barbecue. The sirloin was perfectly cooked, and generously served. The chicken was deliciously spiced, and wonderfully buttery on the tongue. The wines matched the food perfectly, and with a Beringer cabernet topping the list, were a cut above the average party wine list. The liberally served margaritas were

pretty tasty, too. The Hitching Post had dessert trays brought to the tables. An array of fancy cakes and cookies finished off the meal.

Dancing was to the sounds of that local favorite, The Jeff Elliott Band. They showed off quite an impressive range of music that kept the party hopping until rather late in the evening.

David Bisol, Executive Director of the Museum, created a fresh, festive, and welcoming atmosphere at the Museum. His motto is: "Upon the foundation of the past, we build a future worth remembering." He is building a strong institution with the help of a great board of directors, wonderful staff, dedicated volunteers, and a vision to bring families back into a place that celebrates Santa Barbara's history every day of the year.

For more information call 966-1601 or visit www.santabarbaramuseum.com.

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Richard Croft and **Carolyn Carmean**



Lawrence Hammett, Board Member and **Harry Hovey**



Diane Soto Ruiz and **Russell Clay Ruiz** posing in front of a drawing by his father, **Russell A. Ruiz**.



Mary Louise Riley, **Mary Tilton**, **Franny Crawford**, and **Marjorie Dundas**, museum supporters.



Diana Replogle and **Amanda Payatt**



Hitching Post catering staff



Jessica Marquez, Spirit of Fiesta



Erin Graffey de Garcia (1998 Fiesta Treasurer) and **Jim Garcia**



Nancy Hutterer and **Karl Hutterer**, Director of SB Museum of Natural History



Erik and **Angelique Davis** (Erik wearing former Presidente Sam Stanwood's Fiesta suit)

Photos by **Amanda** and **Richard Payatt**