



PATRONATO

Mission San Xavier del Bac Spring 2025

Federal Grant:

In August, we were honored to be selected as the recipient of a National Park Service Semiquincentennial Grant to assist with funding the retablo facade project.

This prestigious grant for \$749,000 is a game changer as, along with the \$400,000 raised to date for this project, it ensures that some 85% of the total cost of this project is now in hand. The remaining 15% is well within the scope of our fundraising plan for the next 18 months.

Note: As this newsletter goes to print, we are still assessing the impact on this award of the new administration's freeze on all federal grants. We are yet to determine if all or part of these funds may ultimately be unavailable.

The Retablo Facade

The Retablo Facade project which has been three years in the planning, launched in January. The three story scaffold now covers the front of the facade and will allow conservators access to carry out the first phases of this project. There is still considerable original plaster on the face of the facade but it is in fragile condition. During phase one of the project, original plasters will be consolidated with products that bind with and strengthen the original lime plaster making it more resilient. This work will continue through late March while conditions at the site are optimal.

During this period, a range of consultants will be brought in. Some will assist in analysis of the more heavily amended repairs carried out by workers in the '50s. During that earlier attempt at rehabilitation elements were reconstructed using cement based plaster. Missing elements were reconstructed not always from a perspective of accurate reproduction. Engineers and architects with experience with decorative elements will also provide insight into the current status of the estipite columns that divide the facade into nine sectors.

The current columns are reproductions crafted in the fifties from casts made from the two remaining originals. Again, several liberties were taken with how these casts were used and the resulting replicas bear only scant resemblance to the originals which are featured in several historic photographs of the facade taken in the 1880s when all nine columns were still in place.



(right) Because work will take place across the high season for tourists, the Patronato has had the scaffold wrapped in a screen printed photograph of the facade. As people approach the church, it is easy to imagine that there is no scaffold. The screen serves double duty, providing much needed shade for the conservators. Below: Workers securing the building-size photograph of the facade.



Pictured (left) Bob Donahue is a conservation technician who assisted with the dome project. (right) Frida Mateos a conservator from Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH). Frida specializes in lime plaster and painted finishes.



3rd Annual Open House on March 8th

80 people joined us at the Mission on a beautiful Spring morning this month for our annual Open House. Our guests were treated to an overview of the current work on the Facade from Patronato's Director of Preservation, Starr Herr-Cardillo, and Preventive Conservation specialist Susie Moreno. They were joined by Frido Mateos Gonzalez, a conservator with the Mexican preservation agency INAH, who is an expert on lime plaster and painted finishes. Frida joined the conservation team to work on the facade project for a month. Patronato's docents provided sample tours across the morning. It was a perfect opportunity for our supporters to connect with our work.

Arizona's changing climate and challenges for a living church.

A structure built in the 1790s didn't need to consider heating and cooling infrastructure, such components of modern life didn't exist. Instead, the massive walls provided some regulation of the summer and winter temperatures to make the church habitable during periods of use.

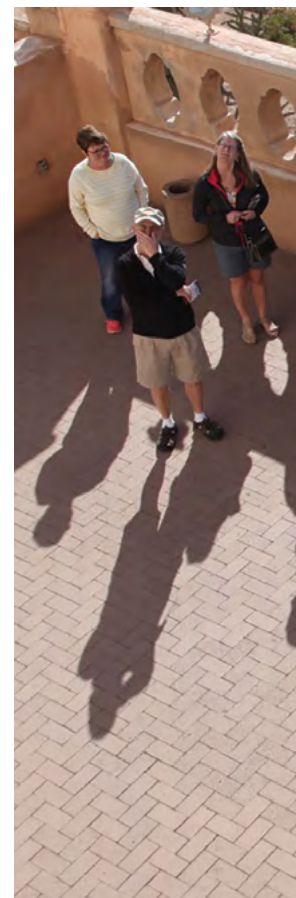
Not so today.

The hotter summer days we are experiencing in the desert, along with the warmer nights, mean that the church holds the daytime heat. During June through September, inside temperatures often exceed 95 degrees during religious services.

Introducing mechanical cooling with air-conditions is not an option. This would change the internal environment reducing humidity and potentially causing lasting damage to the fragile plasters and the artwork that the plaster supports.

During winter months, on freezing mornings, worshipers experience bitter cold. Electric heating provides some relief, but the number of units needed to make a significant difference is a burden for the aged electrical infrastructure that currently exists inside the church.

Patronato has received a planning grant from the Tohono O'odham Nation to study potential passive and other solutions that could improve conditions within the church. This planning grant will help inform solutions that will then be part of a larger project to implement the recommendations.



Re-lamping the Mission Interior.

It is 25 years since interior lighting was installed at the Mission to showcase the newly conserved interior art. Much of that infrastructure is aged and failing so Patronato is investigating a new plan to upgrade the electrical infrastructure within the church along with a new lighting plan.

Modern lighting technology provides many more options than those available 25 years ago. New lights generate less heat. They also can be “tuned” to maximize the perception of the art. The much smaller fixtures means that key detail can be accentuated keeping the emphasis on the interior spaces rather than the lighting fixtures themselves.

Again, this project is complex and will involve both a planning phase where an assessment of the infrastructure and the type of upgrades needed to support the new systems precedes the implementation phase to follow.



Patronato Docents

Since 2011, the Patronato worked to build a vibrant docent program introducing the visiting public to the miracle that is the White Dove. During the winter high season, we were providing as many as 6 tours a day.

This all changed during the pandemic. With the program shuttered for over two years, along with some critical changes to the program when it returned, many of our stalwart docents drifted away. For two years we have been working to rebuild the program.

We still need to recruit 10 new docents to provide the capacity to offer a full complement of tours. If you have some 8 hours a month, love meeting people from around the world and want to support one of the nation's most important heritage buildings, consider becoming a docent.

To find out more, call Miles at 520-407-6130, or go to patronatosanxavier.org/about/docents and complete the inquiry form.

Tribal Engagement

An historic property like the Mission that resides on ancestral lands that now comprise part of the Tohono O'odham Tribal Nation means that an important constituent group is the Tohono O'odham people. Their ancestors helped build the church and during periods when the church was abandoned, they protected the church and its contents. For many members of the Wa:k community, the church represents an important part of community life and the Patronato Board is committed to making preservation work a partnership, ensuring that our work to preserve the church is not done for the community of Wa:k, but rather with the community.

The Chair of the San Xavier District has long been an ex officio member of the Board. Recently the Board's by-laws were amended to provide for at least one Board seat reserved for a community member. Currently Manny Martinez holds this position. Community outreach extends to staff and conservators attending meetings of the District Council, and with community elders, to share information about preservation projects, and to solicit information and advice regarding critical decisions pertaining to preservation work.

The Patronato is extremely fortunate that our long-time independent contractor conservator, Tim Lewis, and now staff member Preventive Conservation Specialist, Susie Moreno, are both members of the Tohono O'odham community.

During our last major project within the church, almost 100 community members toured the project, with opportunities to see artwork within the highest sections of the church in places seldom available to the public

Time to renew your Friends of Patronato status?

The Patronato's fiscal year runs July 1 to June 30. For your "Friends" status to remain current you need to have made a philanthropic gift of \$50 within the current fiscal year. "Friends" receive this annual newsletter, are eligible to participate in our Friends of Patronato Zoom lecture series throughout the year and receive invites to our annual Open House to view current projects at the Mission. A gift of \$100 establishes you as a "Concert" Friend and places you on the list to receive the early invitation to our annual concert series, "Patronato's Christmas at San Xavier."

Our "Friends" program has been a game changer for the Patronato. It has provided a level of sustaining funds that assist with the management and planning of projects at the Mission.

Patronato's Endowment

In our last edition we reported that two significant estate gifts have added over \$1 million to the Patronato Endowment. This trend continues. This year a further \$200,000 has been added. The Board's decision, four years ago, to move the bulk of windfall estate gifts to the Endowment has had the impact of doubling the endowment in the last five years.

The goal is to grow the endowment so that it might fund annual preservation maintenance activities. (It already funds the salary of our Preventative Maintenance Technician who is based full-time at the Mission.)

Once the buildings across the campus have been rehabilitated, core maintenance (which will always be a significant function at this historic site) can be funded in perpetuity.

If you are reviewing your estate plan and are interested in providing a legacy gift, please call Miles at 520 407-6130, or Deanna at 520-409-0025.

Annual Report

Graphs providing information about income and expenditure across Patronato's last fiscal year (2023 - 2024) are available at our website. Use this QR code to take you there.

We also provide a listing of current donors across the last fiscal year. Check to see that we have captured your information accurately.



Your Annual Gift

Because of you and our entire community of support, we are able to embark on major priority projects like conserving the retablo facade. Thank you for all that you do!

If you haven't made a donation since July 1st 2023, there's still time before our fiscal year ends June 30.

Keep your "Friends of Patronato" status current and help us finish our year strong by donating today!

patronatosanxavier.org/donate

Board of Directors Update

This year, the Patronato welcomes two new members to the Board:



Brooks Jeffery is a professor emeritus from the College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture at the University of Arizona and is currently working as a heritage conservation consultant. With specialties in Spanish Colonial architectural history, earthen architecture and heritage conservation, he brings considerable expertise to the work of the Patronato and has already assumed Chair of the Board's Conservation Committee.

Laura Wallace is a designer with Tucson Cabinet and Stoneworks. Laura has served on a number of non-profit boards and has experience with many aspects of fundraising including event management and planning. Laura is a long time resident of Tucson and is a proud alumni of the U of A.



Three members who have played a vital part in the work of the Board termed off this year:

Nancy Odegaard, across the last eight years, assisted the Board to align their work with current preservation ethics and has helped identify preservation priorities that had not been on the radar. One of her key projects was her research and preservation work on the many bells that are found on the Mission Campus. Nancy continues as a Community member of the Board's Conservation Committee.

David Yetman lent his expertise to many projects that served to spotlight the Mission and Patronato's preservation work. In 2018, he developed an episode of his signature television program "In the America's" which highlighted the Kino mission chain and featured the story of the preservation work at MSX. (Those interested in purchasing a copy of this episode, should call our development office. The DVD is just \$15.00 plus shipping.

Lastly, **Michael Urman** served as most recent Board President and prior to that chaired the Finance Committee. He brought his significant legal and economic acumen to the work of the Board.

Patronato's Newest Staff Member

Associate Director **Deanna Dillard** joins Patronato to provide support across events management, donor relations, assisting with Board liaison and the Docent Program. Deanna previously held positions at the Center for Creative Photography and the University of Arizona Foundation in roles focused on development, nonprofit administration and events. She is a native Tucsonan and passionate about preserving the history and culture of our desert home.



Patronato San Xavier Board of Directors

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Deanna Dillard, *Associate Director*
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Technician / Conservator*
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The 2024 Christmas Concerts

Thank you to all who made our concert series such a great success again this year, especially your family and corporate underwriters.

In the past, these concerts provided the bulk of funding to assist with major projects at the Mission. As our organization matures and grants are increasingly providing the income to sustain the large scale projects, the concerts take on a different role. These evenings provide an opportunity for our generous supporters to come together at the Mission. Here, wrapped in the baroque splendor of San Xavier, donors can relish in the work they have helped fund, and with the knowledge that they have aided in saving the building from irreparable loss.

It is for this reason that we have chosen to limit the concerts to just two performances across two nights. Before the pandemic, managing seven performances across four nights was a stretch for an organization with then just two full-time staff.

If you or your business might be interested in becoming an underwriter for the concert series, please call Deanna at 520-409-0025 and discuss the variety of options. This is a special opportunity to have your company name associated with one of Tucson's most beloved events.

Our wonderful 2024 corporate and family sponsors:

Desert Diamond	James H. and Francis R. Allen Family Foundation	Judith Marro
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