



# Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation

To Bring Alive the History of Santa Barbara for Present and Future Generations

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## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MORE PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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### **Dog Days at the Presidio – Historical Human Remains Detection Dogs Scheduled to Visit El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park**

*Special presentation offers a chance to see talented animals showcase their skills*



(Santa Barbara, CA) – At 2:00 PM on Sunday, September 7, 2008, El Presidio de Santa Barbara will be visited by Adela Morris and several four-footed graduates of her Institute for Canine Forensics. These specially trained Human Remains Detection (HRD) dogs have become one of the most promising new investigative tools

available to archaeologists. Join us for a special presentation on this fascinating science and watch some of the Institute's talented animals display their amazing skills in the Presidio courtyard.

The Institute for Canine Forensics, a non-profit organization based in Woodside, California has helped pioneer a new field of Archaeology utilizing the incredible canine sense of smell.

Providing needed information on canine olfactory capabilities, the Institute is developing advanced techniques in the use of canines as a forensic tool to better assist investigative and cultural resource management agencies. For some time, the Institute has been sending out teams of these specially trained dogs to help officials search for long-missing persons at such places as the World Trade Center in New York, the site of the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster, the Loma Prieta and Mexico City Earthquakes, the Oakland Firestorm, and the Oklahoma City bombing site. Human remains detection (HRD) dogs trained specifically to locate historical bodies have assisted scientists in identifying the Donner Camp at Alder Creek, cemetery plots on Pilot Hill in Truckee, at Half Moon Bay, and the El Dorado Hills in California. Spanning the globe, they also identified a mass grave from the 1815 Napoleonic Wars in the Czech Republic.

As part of their visit, a team of canine's from the Institute will survey the length of the reconstructed El Presidio de Santa Barbara Chapel where 51 known individuals are buried



**On site in Nevada, Rhea (who will be at the presentation in September) is pictured working at a Chinese Cemetery from the gold rush. All head stones are missing and a road has been graded into the middle of the open field. Rhea is alerting at either artifacts or a grave. Photo courtesy of Adela Morris and the Institute for Canine Forensics.**

beneath the chapel floor. While the Royal Presidio of Santa Barbara was founded in 1782, the same year as the first recorded burial, records indicate that the Chapel was not completed until 1787 opening up the possibility for previously unknown burials beneath and in the vicinity of the current reconstructed chapel.

SBTHP archaeologist Michael H. Imwalle spoke to the practical benefits of this type of archaeological investigation, adding “Canine searches do not disturb the site in any way, as

the dogs do not dig, and it is much less expensive than other methods like ground penetrating radar. We’re excited about this new approach to non-destructive remote sensing technologies and hope it will help Presidio archaeologists with ongoing research on the Presidio cemetery.”

With roughly 220,000,000 olfactory cells compared to about 500 in the human nose, Canine noses are about 44% more effective than their human counterparts, giving them a superior sense of smell. Keeping their noses close to the ground to pickup buried scents, HRD dogs are trained specifically to alert to old bones, teeth, coffin wood and grave soil which all retain traces of residual human scent. Most HRD dogs are working breeds (German shepherds, Australian shepherds, Dobermans, Belgian cart dogs) or mixed breeds and start training for this specialized task at about seven weeks of age.

For more information about the Institute for Canine Forensics visit [www.k9forensic.org](http://www.k9forensic.org)

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## CALENDAR LISTING

### **Historical Human Remains Detection Dogs**

A special presentation at El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park

#### **DATE & TIME**

Sunday, September 7, 2008

2:00 PM

#### **WHERE**

El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park

123 East Canon Perdido Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

#### **ADMISSION**

SBTHP members: FREE

16 and Under: FREE

Non-members: \$10

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Visit [www.sbthp.org](http://www.sbthp.org) or call (805) 965-0093

#### **SHORT DESCRIPTION**

Join the SB Trust for Historic Preservation for a special presentation on the fascinating history of historical human remains detection dogs and watch some of the Institute for Canine Forensics talented animals display their amazing skills in the Presidio courtyard.

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**ABOUT the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP)** – Founded in 1963 by Dr. Pearl Chase and other concerned community leaders, the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization working to preserve, restore, reconstruct and interpret historic sites within Santa Barbara County. SBTHP is the primary force behind the reconstruction and preservation of El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park and the restoration of Casa de la Guerra in downtown Santa Barbara. SBTHP is also preserving and restoring the Santa Inés Mission Mills—the site of a future California State Park and recently purchased the building that housed Jimmy’s Oriental Gardens, providing an opportunity to interpret the history of Santa Barbara’s Asian community in the Presidio neighborhood. **SBTHP is currently reconstructing the Northwest Corner of El Presidio de Santa Barbara, the eighteenth-century Spanish colonial fort that is Santa Barbara’s birthplace.** Using over 50,000 adobe bricks made on site, these additions will eventually house the new Presidio visitors’ center, and with the help of the new Santa Barbara Presidio Research Center, serve to interpret the city’s Hispanic heritage, and the larger multi-cultural heritage of the surrounding Presidio neighborhood from the eighteenth century to the present. **For more information visit [www.sbthp.org](http://www.sbthp.org)**

**ABOUT Archaeology at the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation** - Archaeological research has played an integral role in the development of El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park for nearly forty years. James Deetz conducted the first known archaeological excavation of the Presidio site in 1961. During the late-1960's and early 1970's a dedicated group known as the Presidio Volunteers focused excavations on the chapel site and the adjoining padre's quarters. Using the 1788 Goicoechea/Fages plan as their guide, they also excavated at various locations around the quadrangle in order to determine the alignment and location of the original presidio quadrangle. During the past four decades the site of the Santa Barbara Presidio has been the focus of numerous archaeological education programs, including an annual Archaeological Field School. Under the direction of Senior Archaeologist, Michael Imwalle, the Trust's archaeological staff continues to conduct field, archival, and laboratory research on a number of ongoing projects within El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park as well as other Trust owned properties.

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