



Santa Barbara Trust
for Historic Preservation



California
State Parks

PRESS RELEASE

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California State Park for Solvang—Planning Process to Continue for Future Santa Inés Mission Mills State Park

(SANTA BARBARA, CA)—**California State Parks has purchased 39 acres of land adjacent to Old Mission Santa Inés, taking the first step towards creating a new State Park in Solvang, California.** The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP) sold the property, which is part of the Mission Santa Inés National Historic Landmark District and includes historic grist and fulling mills, to the State in late 2008 for a future State Historic Park. SBTHP has agreed to continue planning and managing the property on behalf of State Parks. **“California State Parks is looking forward to working with SBTHP and the community to protect and preserve this significant historic site”** commented Channel Coast District Superintendent Richard Rozzelle.



Fulling mill at Santa Inés Mission Mills Complex.

According to SBTHP’s Executive Director Dr. Jarrell Jackman, “SBTHP will be working to develop community partnerships to plan for future public access, enhancement of educational opportunities and protection of the park resources within the Landmark District.” Access to new park land will not be permitted, except by pre-arranged

appointment with SBTHP, until an “Initial Public Use Plan” is completed in Spring 2010. Special tours may be arranged by contacting SBTHP at (805) 965-0093.

In order to aid community building efforts, **SBTHP has been awarded a technical assistance**



Grist mill at Santa Inés Mission Mills Complex.

grant from the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program to help facilitate partnership building, organizational development, and conceptual planning for the proposed park. With RTCA’s help, California State Parks and SBTHP hope to create a viable partnership group that can help orchestrate efforts to open the Santa Inés Mission Mills property to public use. Potential improvements are

envisioned to include designated parking, trail access, restrooms, and interpretive displays.

Old Mission Santa Inés has been an active partner in shaping the future park by granting trail easements to connect the two sites. In addition, SBTHP recently planted thousands of olive trees in a joint project with the Mission to reintroduce early Mission-era agriculture. The currently envisioned system of walking trails through the newly planted olives will link the Mission complex to the Mills and provide interpretive opportunities for a significant era in California history. **Fr. Michael Mahoney, OFM Cap., Pastor at Old Mission Santa Inés added, "We here at the Mission are very enthused about working with SBTHP. This joint project provides a unique opportunity to understand more fully the history of Old Mission Santa Inés and the Mission Period in California. This venture will make a visit to Old Mission Santa Inés even more memorable."**

To help achieve these goals, SBTHP will continue to hold a series of public meetings in the Santa Ynez Valley to discuss the project scope, partnership opportunities, and to initiate discussions and field potential questions. For more information on the Mission Santa Inés National Historic Landmark District, the Santa Inés Mission Mills or the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation visit www.sbthp.org.

About the Mission Santa Inés National Historic Landmark District—Designated an Historic Landmark District in 1999 by the National Park Service for possessing national significance in commemorating the history of the United States, the 95 acre area composing the District is currently owned by three separate entities: The Archdiocese of Los Angeles owns Old Mission Santa Inés (forty acres), California State Parks owns the Santa Inés Mission Mills property (recently acquired from SBTHP), and the City of Solvang owns Lot 72 (sixteen adjacent acres). Founded in 1804, Mission Santa Inés is one of the finest examples of a Mission complex

containing buildings, structures, archaeological sites, ruins, and artwork important to understanding the Hispanic and Native American heritage of California. The fulling mill, built in 1821 by Joseph Chapman, is one of the earliest industrial sites in California. Together these attributes form the basis for the area's national distinction.

About the Santa Inés Mission Mills Complex—In 1819, Fr. Francisco Xavier de la Concepción Uría called for the construction of a water-powered grist mill in an effort to increase agricultural production at Mission Santa Inés. By 1820, two stone reservoirs and a stone mill building were built into the slope of a small hill above Alamo Pintado Creek, about half a mile from the church. Water was supplied by a small earthen ditch or *zanja* that diverted water from Zanja de Cota Creek more than two miles away. The mill was of an ancient design, using a horizontal wheel powered by a water jet to turn a mill stone attached to its axle. It was used to grind wheat, oats, and barley into flour and corn into meal.



Santa Inés Mission Mills Complex circa 1889 with Old Mission Santa Inés in the background. Image courtesy of Elizabeth Hvolboll.

A second mill, intended to increase the production of woolen cloth, was added to the upper end of the large reservoir in 1820/21. The fulling mill was designed by American-born Joseph Chapman. Chapman designed and supervised the construction of machinery that pounded and turned woolen cloth while it soaked in a solution of diatomaceous earth and urine. The fulling process tightened the weave of the cloth by removing excess grease

(lanolin) and forcing the wool fibers to interlock.

With the coming of Mexican-era California in the 1820s, industrialization of Mission agricultural enterprises slowed. In 1836 Mission Santa Inés was divided under orders from Mexican Governor Mariano Chico. Through a combination of good luck and respectful owners the entire complex has been preserved in its original agricultural context. Previous owners Ellen and Harry Knill, comprehending the Mills' immense value to history and understanding what they represent, not only took care to preserve the site, but sponsored archaeological studies and roofed the mill buildings before selling the property to the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation in 1996.

About the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP)—Since 1963, the mission of SBTHP has been to encourage the preservation of historic buildings and sites in Santa Barbara County. We have rebuilt major portions of Santa Barbara's Royal Presidio, which we

operate as El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park, and recently purchased the building that housed Jimmy's Oriental Gardens, providing an opportunity to interpret the history of Santa Barbara's Asian American community in the Presidio neighborhood. SBTHP has also restored and operates as an historic house museum Casa de la Guerra, the 1820s home of Presidio Comandante José de la Guerra. We are currently preserving the Santa Inés Mission Mills, the site of a future California State Park. These are but a few of the many projects SBTHP is presently pursuing—learn more by visiting www.sbthp.org.

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