

The Santa Barbara Historical Museum:

Ever More Magical

By **Richard, Amanda, and Marshall Payatt** /
Special to CASA

The Santa Barbara Historical Museum is creating its own history of magical events. This year's *Remember The Magic* party was another triumph. The theme was the same as last year's party, yet it was executed with even more panache this year. Thanks are owed to Museum Director David Bisol and three-time Event Co-Chairs Ralph and Diane Waterhouse. Their vision has been to create a holiday party that reaches out to families, not just adults.

The evening began at the door with the music of the James Michael Consort: James de Garcia and Michael Aberle lyrically playing various stringed instruments of the Renaissance period. Also greeting guests were costumed Santa Barbara Revels players, who kept the atmosphere lights and amusing. To the great delight of all, the main gallery featured the museum's latest acquisition: a wonderful carousel, on permanent loan from the Museum of Art. The children laughed and giggled as they rode around on this old fashioned entertainment, built by William Dentzel in 1989, and donated

Photos by Richard, Amanda, and Marshall Payatt



Ed Sands, Board President



Diane, Clare, and Ralph Waterhouse. Ralph and Diane served as co-chairs of the event.

by William and Marion Dentzel, of the famous Dentzel carousel building family.

Also featured in the main gallery were a delightful pair of toy bears from one of the legendary Kernohan's Toys animated window displays.

At the appointed hour, the doors to the courtyard flew open. In full kilt and playing his own bagpipes, Board of Trustees President



Santa Barbara Morris Men

Ed Sands led the partygoers to the courtyard dining area. There, a gigantic and festively decorated holiday tent covered a large dance floor. When the Jeff Elliott Band began to play, the children began to dance, leading the way for the rest of us.

The hearty buffet meal catered by The Hitching Post was another treat.

During the meal, the Santa Barbara Revels continued to entertain the crowd. The Santa Barbara Morris Men, a featured part of the upcoming Revels show, danced traditional Morris dances. All the while, Mark Collier, everybody's favorite local magician, charmed the diners and especially the children, with his close-up magic.

As dinner concluded, the lights went down, and the Rudenko Dance Company's sugarplum fairies took the floor. They swooped and swirled about to the music of composer Danny Troob. Then, out of the crowd materialized Father Christmas. He waved his arms and magically snow began to fall on the dance floor. The children surged forward to hug Father Christmas and to play in the snow. Smiling and greeting the children, Father Christmas handed out stuffed animals with messages that said, "May you never be too grown up to search the skies on Christmas Eve." The joyous expressions on the children's faces would melt the heart of any Grinch.

After Father Christmas left the stage, the children stayed on the dance floor.

This is a Christmas party that our whole family recommends. Casa's 10-year-old cub reporter Marshall Payatt said of the evening,



Mary, Anne, and Margaret Griffin



James de Garcia and Michael Aberle of James Michael Consort



Santa Barbara Revels - **Ken Ryals, Maggie Mixsell, Susan Keller, David Brainard**



Father Christmas talked with most of the children

"Nice kids were everywhere, and the magician made everyone laugh." The organizers for this party are helping the next generation to grow up knowing that museums are places for fun, and perhaps most importantly, the celebration of our past. Happy Holidays!

Visit www.santabarbaramuseum.com for information. Visit Tu- Sa 10-5pm, Su 12-5pm.



The Bisol Family from left: **Darla Maciel, Tony Bisol, Tatum Maciel, Marty Maciel, Carly Maciel, and David Bisol**, Executive Director, Santa Barbara Historical Museum



Father Christmas and Sugar Plum Fairies