

Santa Barbara Historical Museum

# Simply Magical

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

**T**HE SANTA BARBARA HISTORICAL MUSEUM is celebrating its 75th anniversary, and their 64th annual holiday party welcomed members with the theme *Remember the Magic*. Not an easy concept to fulfill, but they exceeded their own lofty ambitions on Saturday, December 1st. The vision crafted and arranged by museum director **David Bisol** and three-time event co-chairs **Ralph** and **Diane Waterhouse** is one that resonates wonderfully with families and children, so well, that the number of families with children attending the event has continued to grow over the years.

Guests were greeted at the door by Renaissance-garbed players and singers from the group *Ye Merrie Wreathe Consort Renaissance Minstrels*. Their caroling and period music set a mood of remembering the past.

The museum had a gallery show by **Edward Borein**, a Western artist, curated by **Marlene Miller**, for the guests to enjoy while they celebrated the amazing growth and positive changes at the museum over the recent years. Once the courtyard doors swung wide, dozens of charmingly dressed children were given a view of a gigantic holiday tent, draped with lights and chandeliers, and a huge dance floor to play upon. It was perhaps the use of the historic courtyard, with the dinner tables set carefully around the sides, that made the party work so well for families. While the children ran merrily about in

plain sight, the adults chatted at their leisure, sipping marvelously delicious cocktails from Top Shelf bartending or dancing to the tunes of the Jeff Elliott Band under the fantastic lights and special effects donated by Bella Vista Designs. Dinner, by Country Catering, was both delightful and plentiful;



Mary and Anne Griffin

hearty on a cool winter's evening. **Mark Collier**, the favorite local magician, charmed the diners and especially the children, with his hijinks throughout the evening.

Then, the lights dimmed, the music swelled, and the Rudenko Dance Company's *Sugarplum Fairies* took the stage.

Gamboling about with easy grace, they danced beautifully around the stage until, from amidst the crowd, appeared Father Christmas. He took center stage, raised his arms, and snowflakes exploded into the air. As the dancers swirled in the snow, and the children ran forward, Father Christmas handed out special 2007

Holiday Teddy™ Beanie Babies, graciously donated by Ty Warner.

Magic? Yes. Even by Disney's standards, it would have been well done. Now if only our son could stay little for another twenty years of this wonder. But, if we are all lucky, there will be another generation to enjoy this party with us.

A Happy Holidays to you all.

The Santa Barbara Historical Museum is located at 136 East De La Guerra Street and open Tues-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 12-5pm. For more information call 966-1601 or [www.santabarbaramuseum.com](http://www.santabarbaramuseum.com).



Janet Sands; Father Christmas; Edgar L. Sands, President of the Board of Trustees; young Marshall Payatt, CASA photographer



Ralph, Claire, and Diane Waterhouse, Event Co-Chairs



Robert and Hilary Hammett with daughters and friends



Stacy Hill, principal dancer of The Rudenko Dance Studio's *Sugarplum Fairies* frolics in the snow



Father Christmas, and this article's co-author for CASA, Amanda Payatt



Mary Newcomb, Guild Mistress



Kikka Bayly, Docent



Anne Dowling and Peter Sonderegger



Brent, Cole, Michelle, and Sadie Kimball, with loving grandparents Wayne and Lynn Ashcraft



Ye Merrie Wreathe Consort Renaissance Minstrels

