By Robert Gutz
502nd Air Base Wing 8th Public Affairs

Two projects totaling more than $3 million will soon give Randolph's historic Chapel 1 a facelift and transform the Religious Activities Center into a multi-purpose community center geared to dormitory residents, while maintaining worship space.

Dwight Micklethwait, 902nd Civil Engineer Squadron project manager, said many of the improvements to Chapel 1 will not be readily apparent to the public, but will correct problems attributable to the aging of the facility.

“The Chapel 1 structure is in very sound condition for an 80-year-old building,” he said.

“However, the heating and air conditioning had become unreliable, the electrical wiring needed replacement, the roof and bell tower had leaks, the stained glass windows were bowing, the original historic light fixtures were in need of refurbishment and storm drainage piping had collapsed.”

Micklethwait said the project “corrects all of these deficiencies.”

“New front doors will replace the original pair, but some of the chapel’s other characteristic features, such as the stained-glass windows and light fixtures, are being restored, he said. The ornate cast stone façade at the front entry is being cleaned and the grout joints repaired.

A five-level scaffold to accommodate exterior renovations stands in front of Randolph’s 80-year-old chapel.

By Rick McFadden

A five-level scaffold to accommodate exterior renovations stands in front of Randolph’s 80-year-old chapel.

Roestro Perez (bottom) and Roger Duarte, contract masons, repair the masonry inside the building during the base chapel renovation on Randolph Air Force Base July 7.

Bruce Wyle, contract mason, repaints the designs on the front of Chapel 1 during the base chapel renovation project July 7.

Christopher White, contract carpenter, covers the carpet and pews with protective plastic sheeting during the base chapel renovation on Randolph Air Force Base July 7.

A five-level scaffold to accommodate exterior renovations stands in front of Randolph’s 80-year-old chapel.

Light fixtures undergo restoration and rewiring during the renovations of Chapel 1.

Bruce Wyle, contract mason, repainted the designs on the front of Chapel 1 during the base chapel renovation project July 7.

By Richard H. Durrance and Roger Duarte, contract masons, repair the masonry inside the building during the base chapel renovation on Randolph Air Force Base July 7.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Alexis Sieker

Promotion and retirement ceremonies will also be held in this facility,” he said.

Micklethwait said planned features of the facility are a large meeting area with a media center, a video arcade mezzanine, a counseling room, a reading room, a children’s room, a kitchen, more rest-rooms, a covered deck, a new air-conditioning system and a fire protection system.

Some of the services now being conducted in the Religious Activities Center will return to Chapel 1 when that project is completed, he said.

Daily Mass is now being celebrated at 11:30 a.m., Saturday Mass at 5:30 p.m. and Sunday Mass at 8:30 and 11:30 a.m. in the RAC while Protestant services are conducted at 8:15 and 11 a.m. Sunday in the base theater.

Dwight Micklethwait, 902nd Civil Engineer Squadron project manager, said the project also renews the replacement and repair of broken and damaged roof tiles and the rebuilding of the hand-up ramp.

Micklethwait said historic plans call for the RAC, which was built in 1934 and is located on H Street near the Air Education and Training Center complex, to become primarily a multi-purpose community center for dorm residents, providing ministry and counseling services.

The project’s completion is expected in early 2012.

“The chapel, which was completed in 1934 to serve the spiritual needs of cadets at the U.S. Army Air Corps Primary Flying School, is one of the Randolph structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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