Moraga Adobe News



At Long Last, 185 Year Old Adobe Opens to Public

Our first year of opening the adobe to visitors has been wildly successful, with over 700 people touring the adobe in 2026, including 200 school-age children. General public tours started in February and filled up as fast as we could schedule them. In addition, organizations like the Girl Scouts, senior living homes, schools and cultural societies have taken group tours of this historic landmark. Visitors learn about the history and culture of the Moraga family and imagine what it would be like to live in mid-1800's California.

Tours will resume in early 2027. Public tour days are generally announced about two months in advance. Check out our website MoragaAdobe.org for dates and to sign up (its easy!). To be notified when tours are posted, sign up for our mailing list on our website. Email info@MoragaAdobe.org for group tour inquiries. You must have a reservation to visit the adobe!



February 22, 2026 - First Public Tour



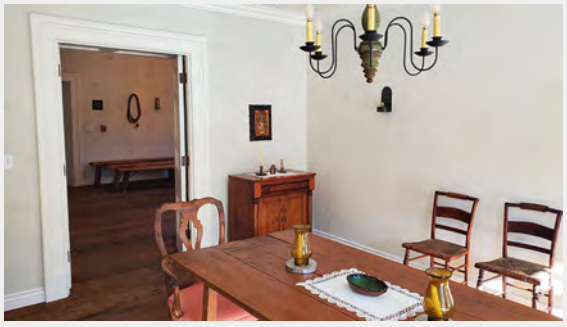
Final 2026 Tour - Orinda Girl Scouts , October 18

Your Donations Make This Museum Possible!

FJMA is an all volunteer organization that relies on private donations and the generosity of local organizations to develop programs and maintain this historic adobe site.

With your help, we are bringing a hands-on California history experience to the community with an emphasis on students and educational opportunities.







"This is cool and awesome"
"Love this place"
"I've learned so much"
"This place has been the most non-boring yet!"

Moraga 3rd graders
Quotes from our visitor book



Letter from our President



To all our dear friends and supporters,

We did it! After 17 years of working, planning and hoping, it is incredibly satisfying to finally have the Moraga Adobe open to the public. My fellow board members, most of whom have been here since the beginning, deserve a lot of credit. They are Jeff Boero, Lance Beeson, Margaret Beck, Tania DeGroot and SB Master. And my lovely wife Teresa Long, who is our Museum Chair, has been instrumental in countless ways to make this all happen.

One Saturday in April, we planned a ceremony to honor the supporters who bought personalized pavers and to dedicate our view area to Bobbie Landers, the inspiration for our efforts. Well, it poured rain all day, and the event was driven inside. But Moraga descendant Lance Beeson and his partner Marilyn sang old Californio songs, and everyone enjoyed taking refuge inside the old adobe and being with friends and neighbors. I realized then that the adobe really is coming back to life, with your help. *Thank you!!*

Kent Long
President, Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe

Unearthing History at the Adobe



SMC Students & Prof. Van Gilder (4th from left)



Students working the dig

Just downhill from the Moraga Adobe's front porch, a red canopy marks the site where St Mary's College (SMC) students and their professor are actively digging for historical artifacts. This fall, eight test units have been unearthed at the site. The class often schedules their work to coincide with the adobe's tour days. Dr. Cynthia Van Gilder, professor of Anthropology & Archaeology, and her students treat tour visitors with a brief talk showing their findings and describing their strategy and techniques. This program has been a wonderful collaboration for FJMA.

SMC's *Archaeological Methods* class is conducting the dig at the adobe. It is a hands-on, skills-based course that gives students practical training in quantitative and qualitative field and laboratory methods used in archaeology, focusing on how archaeologists collect, process and analyze physical and material data in both field and lab settings.

The students have found many items of interest, including pieces of pottery and glass, metal items, and an occasional animal bone. The challenge is in identifying each finding. Over the winter, the students will spend their time in the classroom lab measuring and analyzing each object to determine what it is and its age. The students will record this data in FJMA's museum collection database program, *Catalogit*.

The Moraga Adobe is providing these students a rare venue for hands-on field research, right in St. Mary's "backyard." We are very excited to see what future discoveries they make!



Sifting soil for artifacts



Thank You To Our Recent Donors!

Ann Sorenson, Barbara Wilcox, Bill & Sue Kidd, Bobbie Landers, Carl And Carol Landers, Christopher Harrick, David & Deborah Trotter, David & Jean Sullivan, David Mayer, David Van Etten, Diana Lee-Boozarpour, Elizabeth O'Shea, Frane Family, Frederick Smith, Gary Brooks, Geraldine Wallace, Grace Edinboro, Henry Wise, Holly & Buddy Burke, Ingrid Wood, Jessica Cross, John Bernstein & Jean Box, Josephine Mele, Karen Wetherell, Katie Hegarty, Kenn & Karen Adams, Kent & Teresa Long, Lance Beeson, Leila Schlein, Linda Luini, Liz & Ray Witbeck, Margaret Beck, Maria Rieger, Marlene Muhammad, Mary De Luna, Meredith Kreis , Michael Sabarese, Nancy Scott, Orinda Community Foundation, Orinda Woman's Club, Paul and Sarah Roberts, Paul Johnson, P.E.O., RBO & Co., Richard Courtney, Rita Sakkis, Robert & Maryett Thompson, Ronald Louis, Sora O'Doherty, Stephen Cohn, Steve & Genene Welch, Steve Westfall, Steven Slosek, Sue & Dieter Scholz, Susan O'Hara, Ted & Lida Urban, Thomas Nootbar, Toris Jaeger, William White III, William Wadsworth

School Visits, Highlights

April and May were busy months at the adobe! Along with regular public tours, all the Moraga 3rd grade students from Rheem, Los Perales, Camino Pablo and Saklan schools visited the adobe as part of their local history day. Their visits were a highlight for our docent volunteers. The kids loved the hand-on exhibits, like trying out the rawhide beds with straw mattresses and feeling the reproduction 1855 Moraga saddle in the museum room. They were particularly fascinated by the 19th century fancy cursive handwriting of Joseph Lamson's diary. FJMA looks forward to more school visits next year!



April 2026 - 3rd graders in adobe's museum room with Moraga saddle

Our Volunteers

Volunteers are crucial to make this organization work. This spring, in collaboration with St Mary's College history professor Amanda Tewes, we had five enthusiastic college interns, who became tour docents, made videos (see our YouTube channel), and helped develop our artifact accessions process. Many thanks to SMC students Christopher Baker, Emma Eagan, Lucy Espinoza, Gordon, Schmidt and Ian Tamagno. Our adult docent volunteers, Ray Witbeck, Kitty Lenhart, and Lucia Filippou, are also much appreciated, as is our newest gardening volunteer Darlene Lee. We love volunteers!

To find out how to join in the fun, email us at info@MoragaAdobe.org



April 2026 - 3rd graders in dining room listening to SMC student docent

© 2026 Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe All Rights Reserved.
No part of this newsletter, including text and images, may be reproduced or distributed without prior written permission

Editor: TeresaLong@MoragaAdobe.org

*Special thanks to Andrew Goett of **Pacific Printing** for printing this newsletter*

FRIENDS OF THE

JOAQUIN MORAGA ADOBE

P.O. Box 872
Orinda, CA 94563

Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe

Historic 1841 Landmark in Orinda, CA



CONTACT US

FJMA
P.O. Box 872
Orinda, CA 94563

MoragaAdobe.org
info@MoragaAdobe.org
Facebook: MoragaAdobe.

FJMA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization Tax ID 80-0579769