Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks is working hard in partnership with California State Parks to open the Castro Adobe as a State Historic Park. Friends undertook the restoration of the Castro Adobe in order to preserve and interpret for the public the only remaining building of the Rancho era in the Pajaro Valley. The Castro Adobe is one of the finest examples of a rancho hacienda in the Monterey Bay area.

Castro Adobe State Historic Park will serve visitors interested in adobe architecture and preservation, as well as 4th graders studying the Mexican Rancho Period and 3rd graders studying local history. In the cocina (historic kitchen), the link between Latino traditions of today and our Californio heritage will be tangible as students experience tortillas, beans and nopales (cactus), which were produced in the Rancho period and are still enjoyed today. The Edna Kimbro Library and Archives – Center for Early California Studies will be opened to serve scholars and other visitors interested in the study of the cultural heritage of early California.
The Rancho San Andrés Castro Adobe is one of the grandest of all adobe buildings representing the Mexican Rancho Period of California history (1821-1848). The Rancho period begins as Mexico first gained its independence from Spain and ends as California became part of the United States. During this period, as mission lands were secularized, families such as the Castros were granted large swaths of land to build on and use for ranching. Located near Watsonville, this two-story adobe hacienda features a spacious fandango room on the second floor and an original cocina, one of the very few remaining original rancho cocina in California. The original carreta (cart or wagon) road to the adobe is still in use, providing a tangible link to the history of the site. The Castro adobe is an excellent representation of a Monterey-Colonial adobe and is an important example of Northern California’s Rancho period.

The Castro Adobe was built between 1848-1850 by Juan Jose Castro, son of Jose Joaquin Castro, who was an original Juan Bautista de Anza expedition member. Juan Jose built the Castro Adobe on the family’s land grant, Rancho San Andrés. The rancho spread over two square leagues (a league is approximately 4,400 acres) ranging from the Monterey Bay to Corralitos and from the Pajaro River to Aptos. Eventually the extended Castro family owned over 250,000 acres, stretching from Pajaro to Aptos to Soquel almost to Davenport.

It was at the two-story adobe and surrounding land that the Castro family raised cattle for trading hides and producing tallow. They enjoyed fandangos on the second floor, as food was prepared on the long brasero (masonry range) in the cocina. The fandangos featured dancing, music and food to entertain the Castro family and friends. There were nearby beaches for fishing, sloughs for frogs, and meat from cattle, sheep and goats. Prickly pear hedges provided nopales to eat and formed fences to keep the livestock out of the fields. To lighten their work, they had oxen and mules to plow the fields, barns for storage and livestock shelter, and fields of wheat, corn, beans and potatoes.

The family utilized former mission Indians to construct the adobe and do most of the work inside and outside, including grinding the corn and wheat for tortillas and helping with the livestock at the rancho. The house offered plenty of room for fiestas and overnight guests. It enjoyed a beautiful view looking eastward. The adobe overlooked the road from Jose Amesti’s redwoods to the Castro embarcadero (wharf or landing), so they could charge those shipping lumber out. The adobe was built one room deep, so the sunshine could penetrate the rooms from two sides brightening the otherwise somewhat dark, cool rooms.
The Castro family eventually lost title to the land and it was purchased by Danish-born Hans Hansen. Hansen completed many alterations to the building. Subsequent owners made changes as well, each acting as stewards of the historic adobe, including noted adobe conservationist Edna Kimbro and her husband Joe, who purchased the adobe in 1988. In 1989, the Loma Prieta Earthquake severely damaged the building, rendering it uninhabitable. The cocina north wall and the south wall of the main house were damaged and in need of reconstruction. The Kimbro’s advocacy for restoration of the building resulted in the sale of the property to California State Parks in 2002. In 2007, in partnership with State Parks, Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks managed and funded the construction of 2,500 adobe bricks used for reconstruction and subsequent seismic stabilization.

Current projects at the Castro Adobe include restoration of the cocina, Potter-Church garden restoration, second floor stabilization and integration of a lift to the second floor for full access. The unprecedented partnership between Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks and California State Parks will result in the newest State Park in Santa Cruz County!

Rancho San Andrés Castro Adobe State Historic Park’s unique cultural resources include the historic adobe building itself and the overall historic rural setting. The Monterey-Colonial adobe provides the opportunity to interpret the Mexican Rancho period in Santa Cruz though the lens of the Castro family and their experience in 1840s California, as well as the Californio experience during the cultural transition after Statehood.

**PHASE 1 RESTORATION**

Phase 1 of the restoration effort is complete, lasted 10 years and included numerous milestones such as:

• Creating a grassroots organizing effort to lobby the State of California to purchase the property.
• Crafting more than 2,500 adobe bricks, weighing 85 pounds each, to repair sections of the building that were damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake.
• Building a steel “rib-cage” inside the walls to support the building during a future earthquake; repairing the roof to be historically accurate.
• Repairing hundreds of feet of cracks in the adobe walls.
• Painting numerous coats of protective lime wash finish to the exterior of the building.

More than 245 individuals, foundations and businesses have supported Phase 1 of the project, as well as more than 130 volunteers who donated thousands of hours of labor.

**PHASE 2 RESTORATION**

Now in Phase 2, the restoration effort is focused on continued preservation, preparing for public access and beginning a multi-stage opening of the park. Active projects include:

• Preservation of the cocina.
• Design and construction work to stabilize the second floor and make it accessible.
• Restoration of the garden, originally designed by famed landscape architect Thomas Church.
• Acquisition of the neighboring Kimbro property, which will become the visitor center for the park and home of the Edna Kimbro Library and Archives.

Truly a labor of love, your support is needed in order to open this important historic property to the public as the Castro Adobe State Historic Park!
CASTRO ADOBE PROJECT TEAM

Jessica Kusz, Project Manager, Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

Jessica Kusz has served as Project Manager for the Castro Adobe since 2007. Her work has included management of the brick-making effort, as well as Phase 1 of the project, which comprised wall reconstruction, seismic stabilization, exterior repairs and interpretive planning for the site. Jessica's responsibilities also include managing installation of a lift for the second floor to meet ADA compliance, as well as second floor strengthening, the final seismic stabilization work and restoration of the cocina. Jessica has a Master of Science in Historic Preservation from the School for the Art Institute of Chicago and a Bachelor of Arts in Cultural Anthropology from the University of New Mexico. In her capacity as preservation specialist for a number architectural and engineering firms, she has worked on many adobe buildings in Northern California.

Anthony Crosby, Conservation Architect

Anthony Crosby is a conservation architect with deep experience, including a 25-year career with the U.S. National Park Service on the protection of cultural properties. Anthony's project highlights have included development of a national assessment of heritage protection needs after a major earthquake damaged stone monuments in Armenia 1991 and 1992, condition assessments and historic structure reports. In addition, he has developed conservation intervention directives and specifications for historic structure and archeological sites in the U.S., Central and South America, Egypt and the Middle East, as well as planning for heritage sites in the U.S. and South America and hands-on preservation work. Anthony currently serves on the Boards of ISCEAH, the International Scientific Committee on Earthen Architecture Heritage, and ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites).

Fred Webster, Structural Engineer

Fred Webster, Ph.D., P.E., has over 30 years of civil/structural engineering experience. Fred, through his firm, Fred Webster Associates, is one of few consultants who can provide expertise on the evaluation of historic and older earthen structures based on laboratory and field-testing experience, or design a modern earthen structure to meet the seismic code requirements of California. On behalf of the Getty Conservation Institute, the National Trust, the State of California, the Cities of Sonoma and Shafter California, and others, Fred developed and tested technical procedures to improve the seismic performance of existing monumental structures and has designed seismic retrofits for rehabilitating existing older and historic low-strength masonry buildings. Fred’s background also includes work on behalf of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for which he performed statistical evaluations of earthquake damage and loss records for calibration of the FEMA/NIBS earthquake loss estimation computer model used by state, regional, and community governments.

THE CASTRO COMMITTEE

The Castro Committee, formed in 2011, includes Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks board members and staff, California State Parks employees and key local individuals who advise on preservation and planning goals and strategies for the Castro Adobe State Historic Park.

Committee Members

Charlie “Castro” Kieffer (Castro Committee Chair), Friends Board Member and Castro descendent
Barbi Barry, California State Parks Santa Cruz District Maintenance Supervisor
Peg Danielson, Friends Operations Director
Charlene Duval, Historian
Rob Edwards, Archeologist
Bonny Hawley, Friends Executive Director
Jessica Kusz, Friends Castro Adobe Project Manager
Barney Levy, Friends Board Member
Kirk Lingenfelter, California State Parks Superintendent III
Don Nielsen, Friends Board Member
Georgann Scally, Friends Board Member
Jim Toney, Friends Board Member
The Castro Adobe cocina (historic kitchen) is significant as one of the few remaining original Rancho cocinas in California. Restoration of the cocina will allow visitors to experience daily life at a Mexican rancho, including food preparation in the cocina and women’s roles in Californio culture, as well as overall life at the Castro Adobe including how the family used the building and site. In the cocina, the link between Latino traditions of today and Californio heritage will be tangible through the similarities of food production on the brasero (masonry range). Visitors, including students, will have the unique opportunity to prepare and taste tortillas, beans and nopales, which were part of life in the Rancho period as well as today.

To date, restoration work on the cocina has included:

- Project team additions including renowned adobe conservation architect Anthony Crosby, to guide the restoration project, and noted structural engineer, Fred Webster, an authority on seismic performance of historic adobe structures.
- Archeological investigation of the interior of the cocina, including position and placement of original brasero, as well as investigation of the floor to determine original earthen floor composition and location.
- Installation of a new roof and historically accurate earthen floor.
- Painstaking removal of all non-historic latex paint on adobe walls.
- Fabrication of historically accurate cocina doors.
- Construction of a reproduction brasero.

Upcoming work on the cocina will include:

- Restoration of wall finishes, using mud plaster.
- Installation of the historically accurate cocina doors.
- Concealment of steel material utilized in seismic upgrade.
- Final structural stabilization of the north cocina wall and roof system.
- Installation of electrical service to provide ambient lighting and interpretive exhibits.
- Development of an Interpretive Plan.
- Installation of interpretive panels.
- Development of a historically accurate Furnishing Plan.
- Furnishing of the cocina with historically accurate cooking implements, reproduction food items and furniture.
- Development and implementation of an accessibility plan.
- Implementation of life safety standards including fire egress.

Once the cocina is restored and the accessible pathway is created, Friends with work with State Parks to begin opening the cocina to school groups, Pajaro Valley organizations and individuals, including members of local founding families. Friends will also conduct outreach throughout Santa Cruz County and beyond.
Located to the west of the adobe, the Potter-Church Garden was constructed from 1968-1972, when the property was owned by David and Elizabeth Potter. The Potters were close friends with landscape architect Thomas Church, who consulted on the design of the garden and provided on-site sketches. Church is significant as the founder of the modern movement in landscape architecture known as the “California Style.” He completed master planning for UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz and Parkmerced in San Francisco, as well as countless residential designs. The garden provides a central gathering place for group tours and special events. Friends is working to restore the garden, following Thomas Church’s original design.

The garden was thoroughly researched and analyzed in the report, “Garden Restoration Report for the Potter Garden,” prepared in 2011 by Pam-Anela Messenger, landscape architect and Thomas Church expert. In the report, Messenger details the evolution of the garden and identifies significant plant and tree species. She also developed a template and landscape plan to enable restoration of the garden.

The Potter-Church garden is a unique outdoor space created by a landscape architect of national significance. The garden helps tell the story of later owners of the adobe and their stewardship of the site through 1988.

Landscape contractor Laura Livingston and landscape designer Kathleen Schaeffer have been hired by Friends to restore the Potter-Church Garden. Construction work is planned to begin in early 2014. Restoration work includes landscaping, paths, drainage and irrigation, lighting, and fence and gate repairs.
The second floor is significant for its use during fandangos. For Californios, the fandango was a major social event, at which family and friends danced, played music and enjoyed lavish feasts during the Rancho era.

In order to accommodate visitors, the second floor requires stabilization and access improvements. Restoration architect Tony Crosby and structural engineer Fred Webster have been working to increase the load capacity through installation of a single steel beam in the first floor rooms that will extend the length of each room to support second story floor joists. The purchase and installation is estimated to be complete in 2014.

To increase access to the second floor, a lift will be installed. The lift is expected to be installed in 2014. The Castro Adobe lift project is considered to be a model for other two-story adobe buildings because the design allows access for all while maintaining interpretive qualities of the site.

Top image credit: Tradiciones Nuevo Mexicanas: Hispano Arts and Culture of New Mexico, by Mary Montano
In 1989, the Castro Adobe was seriously damaged by the Loma Prieta Earthquake, ending its use as a private residence. The north cocina wall was severely damaged in the earthquake and careful evaluation concluded that the wall must be reconstructed. Many adobe bricks would be needed to complete the reconstruction of the wall. In the summer of 2007, under the leadership of Friends board members and Project Manager Jessica Kusz, Friends partnered with adobe brick-making expert Tim Aquilar and began the process of making 2,500 bricks, each measuring 14 inches x 28 inches and weighing approximately 85 lbs.

Because it was critical to ensure that the new adobe bricks were compatible with the existing adobe bricks, testing of existing adobe bricks was done to reveal the sand, silt and clay content. After significant research by the project team to identify the right local dirt choice to match the existing adobe bricks, Rick Santee, owner of Santa Cruz County-based Central Home Supply, was selected as the supplier. The first 40 yards of dirt was delivered July 27, 2007. The brick-making project relied on a force of more than 150 volunteers, aided by California Conservation Corps workers. After being formed, the bricks had to be lightly watered daily to ensure a slow drying process. Neighbors assisted with this task. After about 20 days, when the bricks were stable, the curing process required the bricks to be turned on their sides, an arduous task due to the weight and fragility of each brick. Despite this, among the 2,500 bricks that were produced only 14% suffered breakage. The finished bricks were then loaded onto pallets, ready for use in the restoration of the adobe.
CASTRO ADOBE SUPPORTERS

Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks Board of Directors and staff would like to thank all the individuals, organizations, and businesses who donated to the Castro Adobe Brick Campaign and have made saving the Castro Adobe a reality.

FOUNDATION DONORS
Borina Foundation in memory of Nick and Lucy Borina, and their daughters, Mary Ann and June
Diane Porter Cooley and Don Cooley from their donor advised fund at the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County

WALL DONORS
Big Creek Lumber
Christine Kieffer & Glen Williams
The Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
Anonymous

ROW OF BRICK DONORS
William Ackerknecht
Berryessa, Castro, Lordge Family Fund
Millie & Jerry FitzGerald
Ben & Mary Ellen Irons
Linda Lee Lester
Scott Mackie & Alison Platt
Pacific Gas & Electric Co.
Jean Vandevort
Wells Fargo Foundation

HALF-ROW OF BRICK DONORS
Leticia Camacho
Natalia Camacho
Stephanie Camacho
Fred Keeley
Peter & Sharleen Cole
Ernie Fenn
Lee Fitzgerald & George Kohn
Kathy & Bruce Fitzgerald
The 2008 Castro Family Reunion
Susan Lange
Leanne Luna
Marinovich Cold Storage, Inc.
Curtis & Margarete Mullen
Rowland & Patricia Rebele
John & Robina Riccitelli
Hardie Setzer, The Setzer Foundation
The Rocky & Judy Franich Fund
Wally & Lois Trabing
The Wakefield Family
Gregg S. Walsh

BRICK DONORS
Alistair Anderson & Elizabeth Marinier
Valerie Augustine
Joseph Sepulveda Barnes
Mary Ann & John Basler
Bay Federal Credit Union
Paul Bernal Family
Dennis & Terese Boronda
Helen & Walter Boronda
Stu Branoff
Julia Brooks in honor of Joaquin Castro
Lyne McCall Caldwell & John Caldwell
Robert Cantua
Richard J. Carter
John A. Castro
James & Dina Cavanah
Peter, Sharleen & Megan Cole in memory of Anna Josefa de Castro
Gregg Consentino in honor of Myrtle Jensen
Gregg Consentino, Kristi Consentino & Robin Hershey in honor of Myrtle Jensen
Lucille H. Corcel
Mark & Terry Corwin
Julia Costello
Leslie Couvillion
Diane Crawford
Virginia R. Davies
Adam Davis
Betty Deleon
Kathy Dice
George Dies & Meredith Mills
Charlene & Phil Duval
Rob & Julie Edwards
Betty Elward
Frances R. Etow & John Livingston
Bill & Kathy Fitzgerald
Patrick Fitzgerald
Peter A. Fitzgerald
Dee Frye
Jeffrey Raymond Galipeaux
Dr. William S. Ginell
Robert Anton Gingg Family
Nita Gizdich
Lynne Grossi
Emil Gumper
Marcella & Joe Hall in memory of Edna Kimbro
Terry Hancock
The Hazelwood Family
Frederick & Aileen Heitz
Jon & Jean Hooper
Vera & Bob Hope
Harold & Shirley Hoyt
Pamela Huckins
Joni L. Janecki
Marisol Jenkins-Sorensen
Javi Jenkins-Sorensen & Dobie Jenkins
Pat Johns
Lydia & Brian Johnson
Jeannie & John Kegebein
Burton Kendall & Sally Towsie
Janice French Kerswill & Ed Kerswill
Richard & Susan Kidd
Karla W Knapp
Marry & Judy Krovetz
Paula & David Kury
Neal Langholz
Paul & Donna Lauesen
Speed Leas
Melanie M. LeBlanc in memory of Bill Parrott
Linda Lee Lester
Ryan Lee Lester
Leland E. Lester
Eva F. Lester
The Lee Lester Family
Linda Lester Properties
Robert & Nancy Ley
Kirsten Liske
Glenice Magee
Scott & Meera Majors
Coco & Mia Majors
Pat Manning
Joseph & Carol Marini, Jr.
Melissa B. Marlow
Leon & JoAnn Mattingley
Mary Jo May
Lew Merrill
Jeannie Miller
Pat Miller
Frank Morris in memory of Mary "Mariquita"
of Francis Arellanes
JoAnn Mueller
Ron Olmstead
Jo Olmstead
The Ron Olmstead Family
Karen O’Neill
Oil Can Henry’s
Richard C. Otter
Leo & Doris Pfiffner
Ken & Allison Pinkham
Ellen Pirie
Marion Pokriots
Frank Pritchard & Cynthia Pritchard-Hernandez
Ocean Honda
Harriette & Douglas Proctor in memory of Martha Proctor
Courtney Elwood Proctor
Cathy Richards & Jack Bradley
Timothy Richardson in honor of Christy Kieffer
Marla Rieger
Veronica Romero
Rae Schwaderer
Cathy & Don Seapy
Lawrence Serpa
Mr. William M. Shakespeare
Nikki Silva & Charles Prentiss
John & Carole Ann Simpson
Shirlie Nielsen Spitone & James Nielsen
Steve & Carol Spragens
Judith Steen
Carolyn Swift
Nancy L. Thomas
Larry Tierney & Tori Nahnsen
Samuel Torres, Jr. & Maria Gitin
The Vyeda Family
Sue Warner
Ted & Jan Weiser
Benedicte & Walter Wenger
Peter A. & Babette Babich
Natalie Wenger
Betty Westbrook
Diane Wilkinson
Charlotte & William Wilson in memory of Albert P. Castro
Charlotte & William Wilson in memory of Adeline Castro Wilson
Craig Winterhalder & Family
Paul & Susan Winterhalder
Richard A. Winterhalder
Russell H. Wright
Carole Wunderlich & Steve Wilhelm
Marianne Wylie

ThatsMyPark.org • (831) 429-1840