



Joaquin Moraga Adobe Newsletter

Adobe Remodel
1941

www.MoragaAdobe.org

November 2020

Save Our 1841 Adobe!

2021 Fundraising Deadline Fast Approaching



The final payment for the Adobe by the Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe (FJMA) to J&J Ranch developers must be made by September 20, 2021. Some of the funds have already been raised thanks to generous individuals and community groups like the **Moraga Historical Society**, **Orinda Community Foundation**, **Orinda Historical Society**, and the **Orinda Woman's Club**.

We still need to raise almost \$250,000 to make this final payment and complete the purchase and restoration agreement with the J&J Ranch developers.

2020 has been a difficult fundraising year. This year has been unprecedented with all the disruptions, events being cancelled, and ordinary life put on hold. We hope that 2021 brings more normalcy and are looking forward to once again celebrating with music, dance and fun at our annual Fandango.

Our fundraising efforts to make our September 2021 deadline will be focused on individual giving. FJMA has set up a **GoFundMe** page: [click here](#) - please share this widely with friends and family. Look for our Adobe yard signs around the Lamorinda area. We are counting on word of mouth to help spread the message to "Save our 1841 Adobe!"

Adobe Restoration has Begun!

In September 2020, FJMA made a required payment of \$50,000 to the J&J Ranch developers, and coincidentally, they started on the restoration of the Adobe. The developers' initial work includes securing the leaky roof, the removal of the 1941 additions, and the grading around the property.

FJMA board members **Jeff Boero**, **James Phillip Wright** and **Kent Long** made recent trips up to the Adobe to document this historic process. Here are some of their photos:



October 2020
Adobe Restoration



Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe, PO Box 872 Orinda, CA 94563

History in Fragments

FJMA members have been on the lookout for interesting artifacts as the Adobe restoration is beginning. So far, the restoration has unearthed some pottery fragments. FJMA Secretary Jeff Boero was able to identify one piece of china as being made by Knowles, Taylor & Knowles, a pottery company in East Liverpool, Ohio from 1854 to 1931. Their pottery was mainly produced in the 1890's. After the company merged with several other potteries in 1929, it eventually failed due to the Great Depression.

Once FJMA acquires the Adobe property, we are hoping to work with St. Mary's College archeology department to do more extensive excavation work. For now, here are some examples of what has been unearthed recently.



Fragment of KT&K pottery



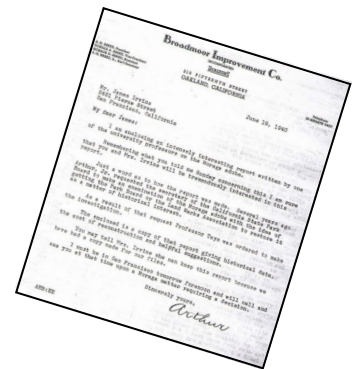
Letter Found — 1938 Adobe Report

Just as the current restoration began, the Orinda Historical Society found and shared with FJMA an interesting correspondence: a 1940 letter from the Broadmoor Improvement Company in Oakland to James Irvine regarding a report by UC Berkeley Professor George Tays on the Moraga Adobe.

This report was made, as the author of the letter mentions, because one of its company executives, Arthur H Breed Jr., requested that the secretary of the California State Park or the Land Marks Association restore the Adobe as a matter of historical interest. This obviously didn't happen in 1938, but fortunately the Irvine family didn't let the dilapidated building further decay and expanded it into a beautiful home for themselves in 1941. The report is a fascinating historical record of the Adobe, its condition and what it would take to restore it in 1938. What was the estimated restoration cost?

The June 1938 report by Professor Tays describes the Adobe as "one of the most delightful spots in the San Francisco Bay Area. The house stands on a small knoll with nearly level top. The view from the site is magnificent.... In the distant background looms the great mass of Mount Diablo ... A small stream gushes out of the hillside a short distance from the barns, it is an ideal location for a home, and it should be a popular place if the Moraga Adobe becomes a state park."

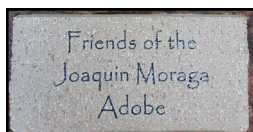
He then describes the building in great detail and summarizes what was needed at that time to recondition the building, estimating that 4,000 24"x12"x3" adobe bricks would be needed as well as shingles, lumber, cement, doors, windows, etc. This work, as well as the task of landscaping and building a quarter of a mile of road, including two small bridges over the creeks, would cost (in 1938) an estimated \$5,000 to transform the Moraga Adobe into a state monument.



Thank You!

Recent Donors

Amazon Smile Program
Anonymous
Paul Barrett
Margaret Beck & Michael Blume
Nancy Braden
Robin Bradley
Isabela Chow
Colin Coffey
Tania DeGroot
East Bay Community Foundation
Andrew Goett/Goett Enterprises
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Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation
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Bob and Maryett Thompson
Mark Whatley & Danuta Zaroda
William T. White III
Ingrid Wood
Margaret & Martin Zucker



Commemorative Paver

A Letter From Our President

We appreciate your support to preserve the Adobe

Dear Adobe Supporters,

While 2020 has been an unpredictable year, it is exciting to see things moving forward with the Adobe restoration. Clearly, 2021 will be our biggest challenge yet! I am grateful to all our passionate FJMA board members, our volunteers, and the continuing support of our community. We have built a energetic organization from our start in 2009.



Kent Long

In 2014, FJMA reached an agreement with J&J Ranch developers, which was finally put into effect in 2018. If we raise \$500,000 to offset the restoration costs, J&J Ranch will transfer the Adobe and its property to FJMA to be opened to the public and operated as a museum and learning center.

FJMA has now raised over half the funds needed, and since 2018 has made payments to the developer of \$135,000. However, the September 2021 deadline to raise almost \$250,000 is fast approaching. If we fail to meet this goal, the Adobe will become a private clubhouse for the 13 homes and the opportunity to open it to the public will be lost.

Please help us to secure the future of the Adobe as a benefit for the entire community, not just a few. This is a now or never opportunity!

Look forward to a better 2021 and thanks for your support,

Kent Long

FJMA President

Charitable Giving, New for 2020

There are lots of smart ways to give to charities these days, for example, donating appreciated stocks, using IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions, or include a charity like FJMA as a beneficiary in your estate plan.



In 2020, as part of the coronavirus relief bill, taxpayers who take the standard deduction can deduct up to \$300 in cash donations. Those who do itemize can still deduct their charitable contributions based on their adjusted gross income.

As always, check with your tax advisor and/or accountant to see what benefits your situation. Want to donate to FJMA? Our Treasurer, Bob Thompson is happy to help—contact him at Treasurer@MoragaAdobe.org or donate online at MoragaAdobe.org

Buy Your Commemorative Paver!

Thank you to all who have purchased a commemorative paver for the Adobe garden. FJMA appreciates your support! This is a great way to put your message permanently on exhibit for future generations to enjoy.

Pavers are available for purchase. Simply go to the website engravedbricks.com/campaign/FJMA or contact Margaret Beck at MargaretBeck@MoragaAdobe.org

The Smiths
Joe, Mary, Sue & Bob
Viva el Adobe!

Tom R. Smith
Class of 2021
Follow your Passion!

In Memory of
John Doe
1930-2018

Newsletter Editor: Teresa Long, TeresaLong@MoragaAdobe.org

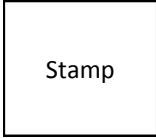
A special thanks to Andrew Goett of Pacific Printing for printing this publication.

FRIENDS OF THE

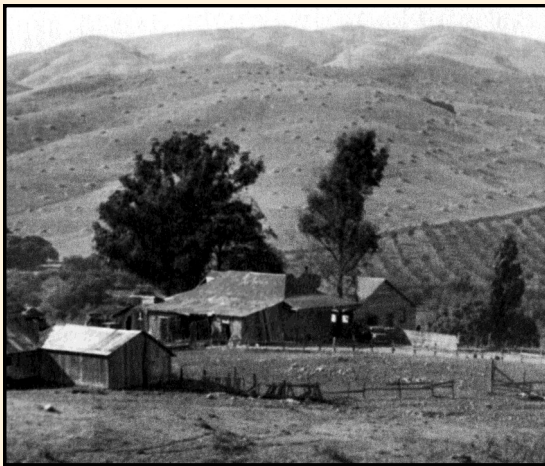


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MORAGA
A D O B E

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 **Moraga Adobe
News** 
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Moraga Adobe circa 1930s
Located in the Lamorinda hills, the Adobe, built in 1841 by Joaquin Moraga on a 13,000 acre Mexican land grant, was home to the prominent Moraga family

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FJMA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
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