



Just the beginning for adobe

By KAREN CLARK

Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — After the birthday crowd goes home today, that won't be the end of it for the newly restored mission adobe.

"I don't think people realize it's a park, and it's open from now on," said Sarah Raines, interpretive activities coordinator at the Mission Adobe State Park.

The School Street adobe, all that's left of the original Santa Cruz Mission, now will be open Wednesdays through Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Docents will give guided tours of the rooms, which include re-creations of an Ohlone Indian family's quarters and the living room of the first Californio to live at the adobe.

"There's just so much history in this little building," said Raines. "Everybody thinks of this as Yankee Santa Cruz; uh-uh, there was a lot of other stuff."

The state has spent about \$3 million restoring the adobe.

Authenticity doesn't come cheap. The careful re-creation of the exact-patterned wallpaper in the Californio's living room cost about \$10,000.

Suzanne Waldenberger, docent coordinator, said all the guides will be in period costumes they made themselves.

The costumes won't be as elaborate as those worn during the period the adobe represents (1834-1850 Santa Cruz), she said, because there are not patterns at historic costume-making businesses from that era.

"Hopefully in years to come we'll get more authentic and more elaborate," said Waldenberger. "We just kind of winged it."

The goal of both the costumes and the careful re-creation of the adobe rooms, is to make sure an important era is not forgotten.

"This represents a short, but very important period in California that isn't very fashionable now in Santa Cruz," said Waldenberger.

Raines said the adobe will "fill in the Hispanic gap nobody has specifically paid attention to in Santa Cruz."

An important part of the experience, they said, will be the "living history."

That will include hands-on work with such things as tortilla-making, candle-dipping, tule-doll-making and adobe-brick-making.

In addition, they want to plant a mission garden with authentic varieties of herbs, corn and beans.

"Living history is a Pandora's box. If you open it up, there's a lot to it," said Raines.

The park is one of 2½ California missions (the adobe is considered just a half) that the state runs. The other two are La Purissima and Sonoma missions. The rest are run by the Catholic Church.

"This is the state's attempt to cover all of the different points of view (in the Indian vs. European story), and really to try to present them all fairly," said Waldenberger.

For more information about volunteering at the mission adobe, call Raines at 425-5849.