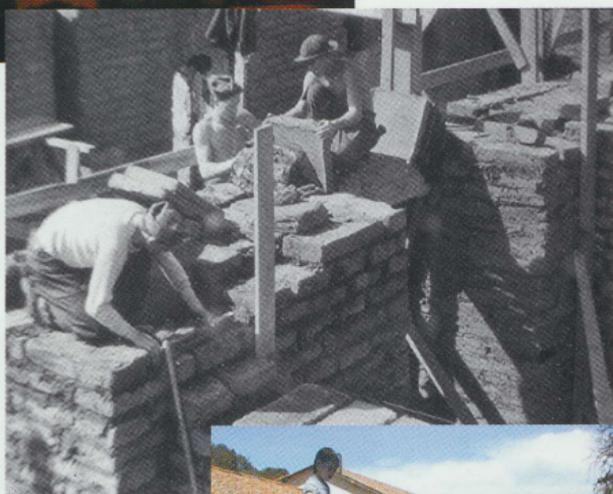
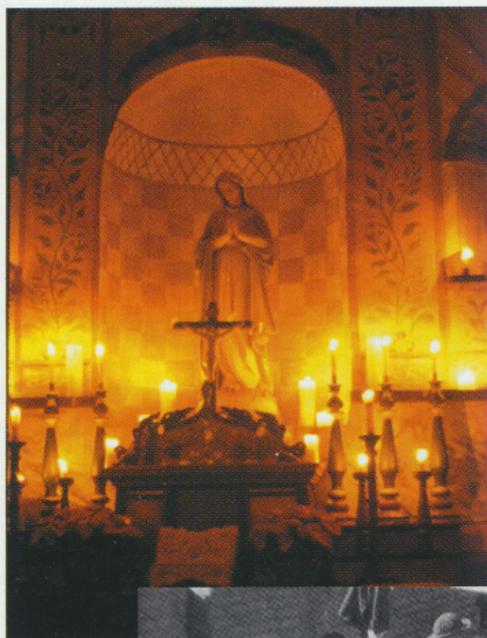


*La Purisima
Mission State
Historic Park*



The Hands of Time

The Hands of La Purisima

The hands that shaped La Purisima Mission were large and small, calloused, colorful, determined, and proud. They came with men who sailed to a foreign land. They belonged to a people who had never seen adobe buildings. They were the hands that struggled to hold onto a dream. They became the hands of young men desperate for jobs. Today, they are the hands of men and women who demonstrate another way of life and guide the hands of tomorrow.

La Purisima Mission State Historic Park welcomes visitors to step back in time. The world of 1820 can be experienced through furnished and restored buildings, representative breeds of livestock, gardens, and 1,860 acres. Missing from the landscape are the people, the hands that created California's 11th and most fully restored mission.



It took many hands to dream, build, and care for La Purisima. Seekers of early California history should remember that each set of hands were unique. They belonged to a person, an individual, who lived a life full of hopes, needs, family, and duty.



The First Hands

Centuries before the Europeans “discovered” California, the Chumash people called the Central Coast home. The rich landscape gave them a prosperous life that included art, music, and religion. They were skilled in the crafts needed for daily life.

Basket making gave the Chumash useful containers that were also beautiful. Using local plants, the women decorated their baskets with intricate geometric patterns. Their weaving was so skillful that many baskets could hold water. The men excelled in carving wood and stone, and in boat building. Chumash tomols (plank canoes) were able to travel to the Santa Barbara Channel Islands. This allowed trade with the Island Chumash for steatite (a soft, heat resistant stone used for bowls) and shell bead money.

The Chumash religion was based on the cosmos - the sun, moon, and stars. A calendar was developed and oral histories passed down. Caves and rock walls were painted with animal and geometric designs. Paint colors ranged from black and white to reds, yellows, and blues. The Chumash were a gentle people who loved music and games. They created songs for worship, entertainment, and lullabies. They challenged themselves with dice and memory games.



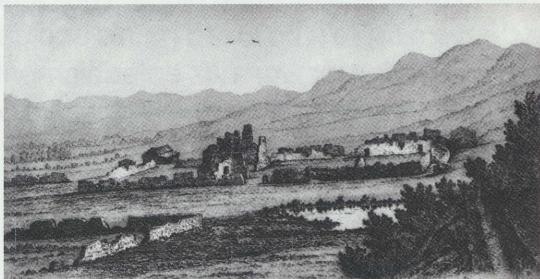


The Hands of Change

As Europeans moved onto their lands, the Chumash way of life changed forever. When La Purisima was founded on Dec. 8, 1787, a small group of Spanish and Mexican soldiers, craftsmen, and Christianized Indians accompanied the Spanish priests.

Building south of Lompoc took many years. Some of the Chumash were curious and enticed to work at the mission. They learned to make adobe and build dried mud structures. They learned to build with stone, dig ditches for water, and care for cattle, horses, sheep, and pigs.

As the years passed, the Chumash made pottery bowls instead of woven baskets. They cut ceiling beams instead of canoe planks. With the herds and flocks expanding and the land planted with olives, grapes, corn, beans, wheat, and barley, the landscape changed. The non-mission Chumash found it difficult to find the native plants they needed. Many people were forced into the mission just to survive.



Artist drawing of Mission Vieja (first site) ruins. Today, scattered remnants can be seen at South F St. in downtown Lompoc.

In 1812 a massive earthquake destroyed the mission. The Spanish colony moved to the present location, north of Lompoc. Constructing the new adobe buildings took 7 years and daily life continued to be a struggle.

Mission craftsmen (blacksmiths, carpenters, stone masons, master weavers, etc.) contracted with the padres for salary, room, and board. Some brought their families, leaving behind civilization for the bleak life on the frontier.

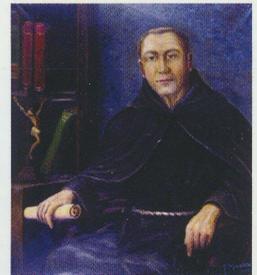
Groups of soldiers were assigned to each mission. Under the direction of a corporal, the 5 or 6 men took their orders from the presidio, the fort in Santa Barbara. Their duties included protecting



the mission from humans, bears and mountain lions, delivering letters for the priests, and escorting travelers.

The Franciscan priests supervised all areas of the mission. The two missionaries assigned to each mission shared

the responsibilities for the Catholic teachings, agriculture, business, and trade necessary to keep the mission operating.



From 1810 to 1834 the missions were in decline. Disease and malnutrition destroyed the Indian population. Supplies and support seldom came during the Mexican Revolution. California began black market trading with foreign countries. Replacements did not arrive and many Fathers suffered from depression and isolation. The soldiers demanded the missions support them, their families, and the presidios.

In 1834, the Mexican government sold the missions to private owners. La Purisima became a ranch and was eventually abandoned to weather and time.

The Hands of Rebirth

A hundred years passed and La Purisima became a pile of melted adobe. Under Roosevelt's New Deal, Companies 1951 and 2950 of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) came to rebuild on the original foundations. The men were mostly from Los Angeles, young, and often undereducated. They earned \$30.00 each month and were required to send \$25.00 home. After work, the boys were given opportunities to finish their education.



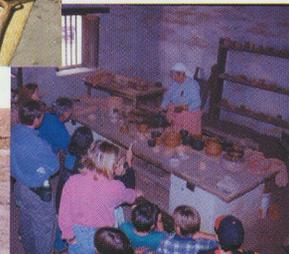
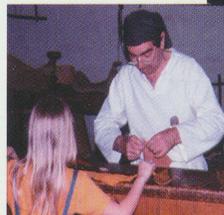
Each day they learned the skills required to build an adobe mission by hand. Carpentry, blacksmithing, and plastering were copied from the early mission days. After 7 years of back breaking work, La Purisima was ready for dedication as a State Park. The proud rebuilders celebrated her opening on Dec. 7, 1941.



The Hands of Today

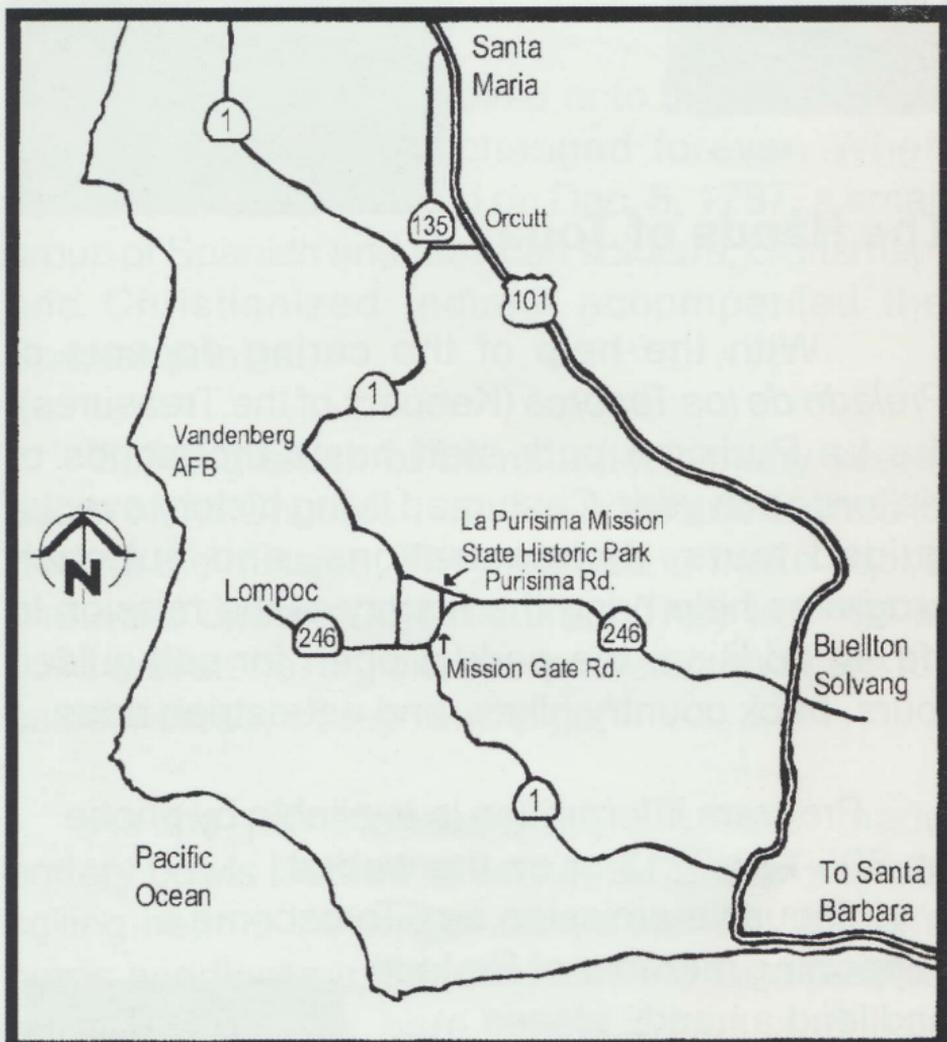
With the help of the caring docents of *Prelado de los Tesoros* (Keepers of the Treasures), the La Purisima park staff hosts thousands of visitors each year. Costumed living history events, guided tours, demonstrations, and outreach programs help bring the history of the mission to life. In addition, the park is open for self-guided tours, back country hikes, and equestrian rides.

Program information is available by phone at: 805-733-3713 or on the web at: www.lapurisimamission.org. To become a supporting member of Prelado and lend a hand, please contact the park.





La Purisima Mission SHP
2295 Purisima Rd., Lompoc, CA 93436
805-733-3713 or www.lapurisimamission.org



Open daily 9 am to 5 pm. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

To use the California Relay Service with TTY, call: 888-877-5378, without TTY, call: 888-877-5379.

California State Parks does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Prior to arrival, visitors needing assistance should contact the park at: 805-733-3713.

Brochure text is available in large print. Please request a supplement when needed.

*Produced by Prelado de los Tesoros
Design and text by Nikki Combs*