

# DOWNIE MUSEUM AND ORIENTATION CENTER

Originally built as the Priest's quarters in 1921, this 1,157-square-foot building now houses the Downie Museum in honor of the Mission's great restorer, Harry Downie. The walls are adobe (exterior walls two-foot thick, interior walls one-foot thick) and the roof structure consists of wood poles (approximately six inches in diameter) covered with redwood planking and two-piece clay tiles. A stone chimney and fireplace built by renowned sculpturer Jo Mora are distinctive features. The floor is a concrete slab with tiles.

This building also houses one of the Mission's main restrooms, with entry from the north side. The restrooms are currently not accessible to the disabled and contain older plumbing fixtures that are not water conserving.

The building needs to be seismically strengthened, infrastructure upgraded (mechanical, electrical, and plumbing), and the interior and exterior walls renovated. Plans include providing upgrades to accessibility by installing new step-free pathways through the garden. Water-saving plumbing fixtures will be installed in the main restroom and in the new Americans with Disabilities Act family restroom to be built on the west side of the building.

As part of the renovation, the Downie Museum will be converted to the new Downie Orientation Center that will provide an interpretive overview of the Mission. To make the building more conducive for tour groups, the present interior wall dividing it into two rooms will be removed. Visitors will then be able to view a beautifully illustrated mural that will be commissioned to depict the chronological history of the Mission. This eight-foot high mural will run the length of the north wall inside the building. At the east end of the gallery, a short orientation video will play on a timed loop providing a five-to-seven-minute



*Downie Museum*

introduction to Carmel Mission. Visitors can also view the re-creation of Harry Downie's workshop through the window in the west wall. This existing workshop diorama provides a lead-in to the restoration story of the Mission, a topic covered in the Mora Chapel Museum.

At the front entrance to the Downie Orientation Center will be a tactile site model showing the Mission complex. The model, situated in the same orientation as the actual buildings, and located above the Basilica Forecourt, offers visitors an excellent vantage point and way to understand the entire Mission site, which is spread over 22 acres and containing over one dozen historic structures.



*Downie Orientation Center Forecourt showing entry and new site model*



*Downie Museum and gardens*