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Fort Ross and Salt Point parks have benefited greatly from many dedicated volunteers and staff who have given generously to these parks. Board of directors from FRIA and FRC have fundraised, organized events, overseen volunteers, spearheaded interpretation and restoration projects, and offered substantial support to California State Parks across many decades.

These digitized newsletters capture the activities over the following historic periods:

- Fort Ross Interpretive Association (FRIA): 1976 - 2012
- Fort Ross Conservancy (FRC is the same legal entity as FRIA but the organization changed its name): 2012 - present

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FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

May - June, 1995 Newsletter

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Highway One to Fort Ross is Open!

Highway One to Fort Ross was closed during the mid-March storms due to multiple slides; it remained closed for an entire month! Visitors could still find their way to the fort via a detour on Meyer's Grade, Seaview and Timber Cove Roads, but traffic on these small roads was very heavy! A troublesome landslide just north of Timber Gulch may need more roadwork in the future, but we are happy to report that Highway One has been reopened.

May is State Parks Month

The theme of this year's celebration is "Preserving the Best of California Forever". Throughout May, the many and diverse preservation programs of the Department of Parks and Recreation will be showcased. Historic Preservation Week is May 14-21. On May 1st, regular admission to all California state parks during the day will be free (except Hearst Castle) as a thank you to state park visitors for their support and to encourage everyone to discover the variety of natural and cultural features throughout California State Parks.

Fort Ross Fumigation

The fumigation of the fort buildings and wall was delayed. The fumigation originally scheduled for the week of April 13 - 18, will take place during the week of June 12 - 16.

Archaeology

The University of California Archaeological Field Program under the direction of Dr. Kent Lightfoot will return to Fort Ross in June. Archaeological investigations will include the remaining section of the fort's north wall, and a Native American village site on Seaview Ridge.

BOARD NOTES

by John Sperry

Seven of thirteen directors showed at the April 8th FRIA Board meeting. Most absences were due to illness. All the same, some important business got done.

The board accepted with regret Sherry Madrone's resignation from chairpersonship of the costume committee. A lot of talent and energy has been lost to that committee.

In the same vein, January and March bookstore sales were down due to the closure of Highway One south of the fort. Yet, good news: final bookstore sales for the year are down a mere one per cent!

A sticky piece of work, the 1995 FRIA budget, occupied the board for at least two hours. Committee work, chaired by David Kenly, helped avoid many mine fields. A balanced budget distinguishing "HAFTA" and "LIKTA" items totaling \$114,000 was approved.

Other good news and good work: State parks has agreed to support half of the Rotchev House recordation by Richa Wilson. This is very good fortune! Library computer software (for cataloging the Fort Ross Library) is in place, as is a new book circulation register.

Three bids on reroofing the Call House were reported. Selection will occur after April 24.

Finally, "DIRECTOR" and "OFFICER" portions of revised FRIA Bylaws were adopted. Acting Chairman David Willson adjourned a busy, productive meeting.

CALIFORNIA SEA OTTER UPDATE

submitted by Sarah Gould-Ginesi

The sea otter was believed to be extinct in California until 1915 when 32 otters were observed near Point Sur. However not until 1938 was a small colony of otters "rediscovered" by the public in an area of rough seas and seclusion when a new stretch of Highway 1 was open 20 miles south of Monterey at Bixby Creek. Their existence had been a well-guarded secret with good reason.

Brian Hatfield of the National Biological Service reports otters can be seen today as far north as Ano Nuevo and to the Santa Maria River on the south. In the last month (March 1995) a distinct large male population has moved south to Point Sal, a prominent coastal point. Wanderers are seen even farther north and south.

Attempts to translocate sea otters have mixed results. In the early 1980's a controversial translocation plan was being developed for San Nicholas Island. Mariculture (salt water cultivation of plants and animals for human use or consumption) was introduced under a Department of Fish and Game permit after that department warned the entrepreneurs that the island was actively being considered as a site for a sea otter colony. The fact that a shellfishery was to be introduced would not influence the department's decision whether or not to relocate otters on the island. For obvious reasons both projects would have difficulty in coexisting.

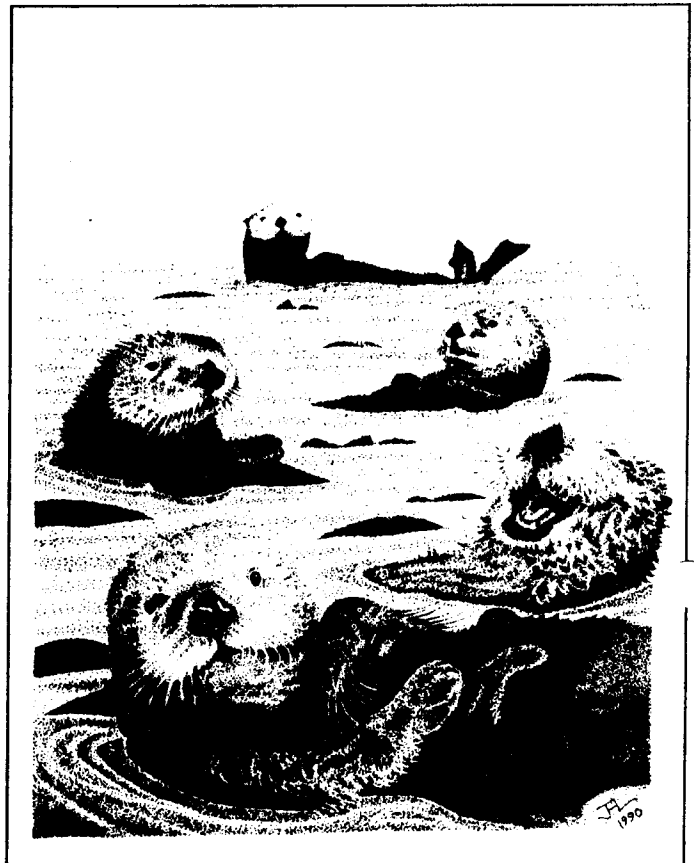
In 1982 the Department of the Interior approved the South Sea Otter Plan and in 1984 action proceeded to make San Nicholas Island a likely site to receive sea otter. This was done in the hope that a new breeding colony would allow the population to increase. It has been only somewhat successful. Some otters swam back to their original home; some died on the island or while trying to swim away. While initial results are discouraging they are similar to the initial patterns observed during previously successful translocations. Transplanted populations often decline when first moved; then gradually begin to increase after several years. By March 1990 a total of 137 sea otters had been flown out to the island and only 14 remained despite abundant food. The final outcome is yet to be seen.

As for the main population the outlook is positive. In the 1970's the count was growing at 5 per cent per year. In the late 1970's and early 1980's there was a leveling off, even decline of growth. Population totaled 1200 - 1300 animals. The halibut gill nets were so close to shore that an estimated 100 otter drowned per year. Legislation was passed to restrict the fishing farther offshore. Since then the otter population has increased by 5 - 7 per cent each year.

Otter counts are done in the spring and fall. Spring has a consistently higher count. In the fall it is harder to see the otter due to the growth of the bull kelp and the otter move farther offshore.

Spring 1994 total: 2,359 (283 Pups)

Fall 1994 total: 1,730 (115 pups).



Sea Otter (*Enhydra lutris*)

Fascinating fact: Depending on which part of the body you examine, sea otter underfur contains between 170,000 and 1,000,000 hairs per square inch, more than any other animal on the earth. The human head has around 100,000 hairs.

Credits: Marianne Riedman, author of *Sea Otters*, a Monterey Bay Aquarium publication, 1990. Thank you to Michelle Staedler, Sea Otter Research Field Project of the Monterey Bay Aquarium and Brian Hatfield of the National Biological Survey who so kindly talked to me via a phone call. Illustration by John A. Love from *Sea Otters*, Fulcrum Publishing, 1992.

BLANKETS AND FEATHER MANTLES IN THE VOZNESENSKII COLLECTION

by Elena A. Okladnikova

Elena A. Okladnikova is Deputy Director of Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (MAE), Russian Academy of Science, *Kunstkamera*, St. Petersburg, Russia. She is one of the co-authors of the 1994 MAE publication, *RUSSIAN AMERICA* (reviewed in the last issue of this newsletter, and available in the reference section of the Fort Ross library). Elena Okladnikova was senior fellow of the North American Sector, MAE. She is the daughter of the well known anthropologist, A. P. Okladnikova from Novosibirsk.

The MAE considers its connection with Fort Ross to be important, and they enthusiastically support cooperative projects. The large collection of ethnographic articles collected by I. G. Voznesenskii when he visited California and Fort Ross in 1841 is a significant part of the MAE's American Department. In 1993 the Fort Ross Interpretive Association sent conservation materials to the MAE to help preserve articles in the Voznesenskii Collection. This year a poster of Voznesenskii's watercolor "Settlement Ross", will be available both at Fort Ross and at the MAE. It is being printed by Fort Ross Interpretive Association, using a transparency provided by the MAE.

The unedited version of the following article, including references, may be found in the Fort Ross Library.



California ethnographic specimens are scattered in a series of collections included in the American Department of the Museum of Ethnography and Anthropology of Peter the First (MAE), one of the oldest museums in Russia. These collections are considered to be one of the most precious parts of the MAE, and they are closely connected with the history of the Russian Academy of Science, and with the history of Russian America and Fort Ross.

There are traditional views about the provenance of some objects in the MAE's American collection which are based on the mistakes and inaccuracy of the first registrars. This article is devoted to a reconsideration of the feather mantles in the Captain James Cook Collection. Both of them were done from the feathers of American Duck (*Anas Americana*). Together with the three other mantles, made of otter fur, they were defined as Tlingit or Chilca blankets. This definition caused the registrars to put them in the American collections of the MAE. A note was made in the inventory that all of them originated in J. Cook's collection. It means that the blankets belonged with the earliest received items of the museum. There were no other documents in the inventory except these notations. All the information for the inventory came from the catalog of O. Belaev, card catalogs by K.K. Gilson and old labels.

Interest in the ethnography of the aboriginal population of America occurred in Russia in the time of Peter the First, so such an early appearance of American ethnographic effects in Peter's "Kunstkamera" was not surprising. The geographical discoveries of Russian sailors were closely connected with the political and

economic interests in Imperial foreign policy. They stimulated the scientific research works of famous historians, G. F. Muller, for one. In his *Outlook of Marine Voyages in North Sea (or Cold Sea) and Eastern Sea, Executed From the Russian Side*, Muller outlined the idea about outstanding and valuable contributions of Russian sailors to world science around the world. He mentioned V. Bering's voyage, and its sponsor, Peter I. The success of the first voyage dictated the necessity of organizing the Second Great North Expedition in 1741. In 1725 Peter I wrote instructions directing Bering to move along the North American coast to Mexico and California. Peter was thinking about the political and economic goals of Russia: competing with the Spanish crown as a presence on the American coast, and accumulating the legendary Mexican gold. V. Bering and his crew never reached California, but reached the coast of North America and investigated the islands which lie between Asia and America. This expedition became the first complex scientific expedition northeast of Asia. It was the beginning of the academic investigations in America, thanks to the activities of G. Stellar.

In later times, after Bering's voyage, the journals and newspapers in Russia periodically published information about the occurrence in "Kunstkameras" of the ethnographic items. The information about the first North American items coming to the museum was published in one of the earliest old museum catalogs compiled by O. Belaev. He noted ethnographic items from the J. Cook collection coming to *Kunstkamera* in 1780 and 1782. English seafarer J. Cook, on the two ships *Resolution* and *Discovery*, undertook three around the world sailing expeditions. The third of these was devoted to charting the coast of North America. It was during this expedition that the large ethnographic collection was obtained.

According to Belaev's catalog, the items from Cook's collection came to the museum in two parts. The first was sent in 1780. "On 1780 under the aegis of the high enjoin various curious things from Kamchatka and the costumes of several American tribes were presented to *Kunstkamera* by Premier-Major Buhm". The items from the Cook collection were transported to the museum by mediators. One of them was Premier-Major K. Buhm. He was the man to whom the successor of the late Captain Cook, Captain Klerck, presented the collection as a sign of gratitude for Russian hospitality. In winter of 1780, Buhm brought the items to St. Petersburg which were acquired by Cook on the islands, particularly the Sandwich Islands. The second mediator who passed to *Kunstkamera* the last part of Cook's collection was Prince A. A. Vaysemskiy. "His majesty Aleksan Alekseevich Vaysemskiy donated to the museum various curious things collected by Captain Cook. The things came from the land of Chukotka and other islands between Asia and America", as noted in the catalog of O. Belaev. Most of the items brought by Buhm to Petersburg were objects from the islands of the South Pacific. The contents of the collection distinctly proves this statement. The majority of that collection is now stored in the Department of Australia and Oceania of MAE. Among the items which came through the hands of A. A. Vaysemskiy were those of native North American tribes. So the

items from the Cook collection were put in different departments of MAE. (Let us call them the "Hawaiian" and "American" collections). Five "mantelets", two of which were woven from duck feathers, were in the American collection. In the list of objects done by R. S. Rasuymovskiy in 1964, all the mantelets were designated as Tlingit or Chilkat blankets. Indeed, only three of them are real Chilkat blankets. They were woven of wool and otter fur (Col. N 2520-5, 2520-6, 2520-7).

In the list of items by K. K. Gilzen in 1911-1915 it is said that the mantelet N 2520-5 was prepared by Tlingit Indians from the down of the wild goats and decorated by fringe. There was a label on it that was prepared from the old card, in the style of the labels on the items from the Cook Collection, which had the number "4" and an inscription in brown ink: "a blanket of otter fur. Aleuts." Selish Indians produced classical fur blankets. The strips of bark were used as the basis of weaving. The fur or the strips of down overlapped them. Ph. Drucker described the blankets of the Makah Indians, who borrowed the art of weaving blankets from the Selish, in the following: *"A robe of duck down, collected from the Makah, who learned to make such textiles from their Salish neighbors. The warps, which run horizontally as the specimen shows, are made of bark fiber into which quantities of down were caught. The widely spaced cedar bark wefts are not visible, being concealed by the down. The predominant color of the robe is the rich soft brown of mallard down, with a few strips of white. It is remarkably light in weight, soft and warm."*

F. P. Lutke in an ethnographic description of the life of the Tlingit Indians stated: *"Indian women are very skillful in weaving blankets from goat's down. They also weave hats from roots, and many colored working baskets which are very light, tightly woven and could be profitably sold in California."* The trading connected the north and south parts of the coast. Baskets were not the only trading items. Indians highly estimated shells and mantelets. But the techniques used differed greatly. Northern cultures preferred wool and fur or down while the peoples of California made their blankets of grass, towing ropes and duck feathers.

The mantles N 2520-8 and 2520-9 look like the Chilkat blankets because of their rectangle forms, but they were made of the feathers of American duck. They have two white stripes on both ends and a gray field between. They are double sided. In special editions devoted to Cook's collection, the mantelets were designated as North American Indian blankets. The leading specialist on Cook's collection, L. G. Rozina, identified them as traditional Tlingit design. Other specialists of Cook's collection have corroborated.

After close investigation of the California collection of MAE and the collection N2520 particularly, I am hesitant to affirm the truth about the identification of the feather mantelets from that collection. It seems doubtful that all the objects from that collection are connected with the name of J. Cook. The majority of the California Collection came from I. G. Voznesenskii who collected from among the Indians on the northwest coast of North America, the Aleuts, and citizens of Kodiak Island. The information about Voznesenskii as a collector of the N2520 collection could be found among the

documents which accompanied the items and in the article about them by R. V. Kinkhalov.

Voznesenskii's important scientific activity was connected with the Russian Academy of Science. He came to the academy when he was a 5 year old boy, as a pupil of an assistant zoologist. The boy was talented as an artist. In his youth, he took part in an expedition to the Caucasus. In 1839 he joined the crew of the Russian expedition that sailed around the world. He collected zoological, botanical and ethnographic examples in America.

He landed at Fort Ross in the beginning of the summer 1841. His subsequent investigations produced zoological and botanical collections which are now stored in the archive of the Academy of Science in Petersburg. The names of the plants and animals were written in Latin, Russian and "Indian", according to academy instructions. He was assisted by several people in gathering the specimens, one of them being a young missionary named Tijos. Tijos presented Voznesenskii with the following gifts: a "kala", a kind of belt which the native chiefs wore during ceremonies (worth 25-30 piasters amongst the Spanish, a high price at that time); a "sipek" or man's hair pin; an "alock" or earrings; an "ucgalku", an Indian boa or woman's hand (or hair?) band.

The information written above was done by Voznesenskii in a list (N Y111) which is now stored in the archives of the Academy of Science and in a letter to F. F. Shrader from 16 February 1841. Shrader was the curator of the Ethnographic Cabinet of the Academy of Science. The belt was done in the same techniques as the mantles, the feathers believed to impart sacred power to the wearer. Voznesenskii wrote: *"This thing was highly appreciated by the Spanish (Castilian) and European travelers because the Indians did not want to exchange such skillful work for glass beads blankets. Approximate cost of this present is 30 piasters or 150 rubles."*

Another donation to the Russian Academy of Science was made by a Mr. Forsman who Voznesenskii met in Sitka, Alaska. Forsman became the governor of the Kuril Department of the Hudson Bay Company and sold a botanical collection to the Russian scientist. This included belts of grass, towing ropes and feathers. In the list N.Y111 Voznesenskii mentioned his bargain in the following way: *"Two Indian belts, very precious because of skillful work. Made in Baja California. Presented in Sitka by Forsman."* Probably these belts are now stored in the collection N 570 of MAE.

In the first months of his stay at Sitka, Voznesenskii made acquaintance with two other persons who helped him in his ethnographic investigation. One of them was Captain John Sutter, the owner of the rancho east of Ross, in the Sacramento Valley, California. Sutter invited Voznesenskii to his ranch, New Helvetia, which was located on the lands of the Nisenan Indians. Nisenan were the trading partners of the Maidu tribe. It is remarkable because Maidu and their close neighbors, Konkow, were the most skillful in weaving the feather mantles. During the stay with Sutter, Voznesenskii bought from him the collection of ethnographic objects. He made a list of his acquisitions, which included the costume from Canada, items from British Columbia and from Maidu. The list, numbered VI, is the earliest (dated March 1841)

VOZNESENSKII COLLECTION - page 2

enumeration of objects collected by Voznesenskii, and is now in the archives of the Academy of Science at Leningrad (Petersburg). Voznesenskii wrote: "On the lands of Captain Sutter during the visit to the Indian village on the bank of the Sacramento River I saw the shaman costumes. Captain Sutter helped me to purchase the costumes for the Ethnographic Cabinet of the Academy: (1) A. Kukshuyi (in Cossomness language) is an Indian costume of raven feathers, a kind of parka, used in ceremonies. The cloak was sent on the ship Vancouver 1842. N.32. Twelve arshins of calico were paid for it. (2) B. Molok. The person who is dressed in this cloak is called 'diabolo' (devil) during the ceremonies. The costume was traded for one thread of bugles from Rio de Janeiro and 1/4 funts of motley glass beads."

According to the information in this list, Sutter sold to Voznesenskii some other things: "(1) Head band, Suisun tribe. The list N VI. states its value at 1/2 piasters. (2) The mantle of duck feathers. (3) Hair pin, also from Suisun tribe, named (sipeck), decorated with woodpeckers' scalps. List NVIII. Estimated at 3 piasters. (4) Two quivers, with a bow in each. The quivers made of California fox skins. (A. Quiver N 29, mentioned in the list of 1842, has 20 arrows in it and one bow. The arrows are from 9 different tribes. B. The quiver, N14. Bow N15, mentioned in the list of 1845, contains 25 arrows, from 18 different tribes. Both quivers are estimated at 6 piasters.)"

So, the first information about the mantles made of duck feathers is given in the list Number IY of 1842. The mantle was mentioned among the ethnographic items bought by Voznesenskii from Sutter. In the other list of 1842 is the same information but may be more variable: "N2. Mantle made of the feathers of American duck (Anas Americanas). N7. Estimated at 5 piasters." The mantle made of duck feathers is mentioned in list NVIII. This list was prepared by Voznesenskii in Petersburg. It said "N6. Cloak or a kind of blanket, made of American duck feathers (Anas Americanas). Suisun Indians. N 7." K. K. Gilsen, in his general catalogue of Voznesenskii ethnographic collections, mentioned this mantle in 1917.

The second person who rendered assistance to Voznesenskii in collecting was the governor of Fort Ross, A. G. Rotchev. Voznesenskii was fond of him and described his warm feelings in a letter to F. F. Brandt dated May 1, 1842. Rotchev helped him to obtain the second feather mantle. The information is in one of the preliminary lists which was lost for some time among the papers of Voznesenskii. Being a personal list of the items donated by Rotchev, it has never been published:

"N 16. Maglal. Feather head dress. It was put on the top of the head by Indians. A. (from Kachlemt) the white pelican. B. Maglal. The white feathers were colored by juice of alder trees. This maglal consists of the feathers from different birds. C. Kchai. Done from raven feathers.

W 19. Kubonu. This is another garment worn by women during ceremonies. Bodega Indians or Tundra Indians made it. ernovskie do not know how to make them.

N 29. Kalaiy. The head net of feathers.

N 22. Hadita. The hair pin. Three items. It was used for fastening the head attire. Kayakaliy. In Russian, bearberry, a tree which grows in the vicinity of Ross.

N 24. Shimamudria. The bird bones which they use as earrings.

N 25. Ishi. The bones (probably for hair pins used as gambling bones or for earrings). A - female, B - male. Ammam. The name of an animal (a hare), the fur was used for making the mantles.

N 27. Kudta. The necklace of Indian work made of shells they call kidta. Widely used.

N 28. Ie-che. A sack.

N 30. Chottokiy. The play with sticks, 46 items.

N 31. Akka. Four bones used for gambling game.

N 32. Moo. The ishkat without the bottom in which they beat up ucha.

N 34. Batnu. A scoop for preparing ucha.

N 35. Kol. Ishcat without the bottom. A stone is put under it to pound ucha.

N 37. Uchusham. Sieve for sifting ucha.

N 38. a,b,c. Chidu. Ishkats for serving meal.

N 39. Ucha. The main Indian meal.

N 40. Ottoko. Sea cabbage. The Indian delicacy.

N 41. Nalolon. The head of the wild goat, worn while hunting goat.

N 42. Uallyi. Indian spears used for hunting goats and other wild animals.

N 43. The ishkat of Columbian Indians.

N 46. Nukkul. The pestle used to pound wild barley. Kchabe. The stone used by Severnovskiy Indians. These pestles are precious and rare.

N 47. Mass. The quiver. Made of the skin of an animal named Nuiy. There are 20 arrows in it. Arrows are called 'shisu', the bow, 'shegni'."

So, as it is mentioned in the list of items presented to Voznesenskii by Rotchev at Fort Ross, the mysterious "ammam" is the name of both the mantle and the animal whose skin was used for making mantles.

The note done by Voznesenskii under N 25 probably may be read in the following way: "Ammam" or mantle, blanket made of feathers. Such mantles Indians used to weave from the skins of the hares. In Indian language the skins of the hares and hares themselves are called 'ammam'."

The analysis of the lists in which the objects received by Voznesenskii from Sutter and Rotchev are mentioned depicted the fact that among the ethnographic objects of Voznesenskii's California collection were not one, but two, mantles. Now these are in the American Department of MAE (col. N2520-S, 2520-G).

Along with the fur blankets, the feather mantles were made as a kind of cloth for cold seasons and were used as blankets to sleep on, in the hot seasons. Maidu Indians preferred to make the blankets from the fur of wild animals such as cats, hares, rabbits. Konkow Indians used feathers for mantles. The most widely used were feathers of ducks and ravens. R. Dixon states that the skill of weaving feather mantles was a special part of the fabric arts of the Maidu. He did not make a differentiation between feather cloaks of Konkow and mantles of fur made by Maidu. He wrote: "The making of robes and

blankets from strips of rabbit and wildcat skins or of the skin of geese and crows was also an important branch of the weaving art as practiced by the Maidu. The fur blankets were more common in the mountain region, it would seem; the bird-skin, in the Sacramento Valley. The skin, with fur or feathers left on, was prepared by cutting it into strips from one to two centimeters in width. The strips, on drying curled or rolled, leaving the side out, and forming thus a fur or feather rope or cord of great softness. A sufficient length having been prepared, it was, in the case of the birdskins, usually twisted with a fiber cord to give added strength. Two poles about two meters in length were then set up about one meter apart. The fur or feathers was then wound back and forth about the two poles till a sufficient length of warp was made. The process of sewing then began, and consisted merely in a slow and laborious twining of a double weft over the successive warp strands, knotting the cord to the outer warp strand at the top and bottom as they were alternately reached. The completed blankets were loose in texture, but very warm and were highly prized."

Cultural traditions of Maidu and Konkow are very similar. The name "Maidu" is derived from Anglicization of the native term "Koyo mkawi" meaning "low meadow". Konkow used to live on the meadow terraces in the canyons of the rivers. Maidu lived on meadows in the Sacramento Valley. In the spring and autumn both tribes used to gather seeds and berries and go fishing for eels and salmon. In winter they hunted for deer. They used to catch ducks and geese with the help of traps or kill birds with bow and arrow. To obtain fur they used to kill rabbits and hares in traps. The dressing of the skins was the woman's occupation.

Kuksu cult was widely spread among the Konkow Indians. During the Kuksu ceremonies Konkow impersonated various bird spirits: raven-Kuksu, the benefactor and teacher of humankind, ducks and others. They performed a special sacred duck dance. Only men could take part in the performance. That means that the dance was extremely sacred. The bird cult in the religious practice of the Konkow and Maidu tribes is evidence of wide use of ritual feather regalias in ceremonial practices. Feathers of eagle, raven, falcon, pelican, swan were used for ritual costumes and personal adornment during the dances. The duck feathers were used for ceremonial belts, blankets and headdresses, (head-dress, head-gear, attire). One of them, made of feathers of the same species as the feather blankets, was collected by Voznesenskii (570-8).

The dancer in feather regalias was the personification of ornithomorphic deity: condor, raven or duck. The identification between the personality of the dancer and the deity was due to the logic of associative magic that means "a part instead of the whole". According to that logical conclusion, the duck's feathers symbolized the duck itself. The person in the blanket of duck feathers was thought of as the duck ghost. The duck ghost was a symbol of ornithomorphic deity, connected with the water element. The magical force of the ghost can penetrate in different directions from deity to real duck and then to the person in the cloak and even to each feather of the bird. As Indians saw them, feathers were sacred and full of supernatural power; so, the cloaks made of the feathers were considered to be highly sacred objects. This suggestion made it

possible to see them as cult objects more than the elements of everyday cloth.

Similar ideas were widely spread among the peoples of Siberia. For example, the fringe on the hunting costumes symbolized the elk's magical power. The hunter in the costume received a part of the elk's magical power. The power obtained by the hunter helped him in the hunting expedition.

Konkow Indians were famous among other tribes because of their skills at making blankets. The Hupa, particularly, were fond of Konkow feather blankets. In Hupa myths, Konkow are mentioned as monopolists of weaving secrets. A young hero of one initiation myth of the Hupa tribe is said to steal the feather blanket in the neighboring village (Konkow?) during the sacred initiation ritual. He made feathering for his arrows out of the blanket. Thanks to the magical feathering the arrows brought him fantastic success in hunting. He became a famous hunter and married two sisters, the daughters of the chief.

Feather mantelets were highly appreciated not only by Indians but by collectors. They are represented by only a few examples in the collections of American museums. The earliest acquisition is in the Peabody museum. It was given to the Peabody of Harvard University in 1913 by Miss L. H. Eaton of Boston. It was obtained in California about the year 1821 by W. Gale. Mr. Gale sailed as clerk on the *Albatross* from Boston to California in 1800, remaining on the coast as agent for Bogant and Sturges, Boston, until 1835. He gave the blanket, several fine old Chumash baskets and other ethnographic specimens which he had collected in California to the family of his friend J. Eaton, whose daughter presented them to the museum.

Another blanket was donated by the Huton family in 1830 to the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The blanket had evidence of long wearing. The third blanket is in the Museum of Natural History in Washington. Lieutenant Ringold who was a participant in the expedition of Captain Ch. Wilks of 1841 to the Sacramento and Feather River valleys brought the blanket to the museum. During the expedition Ringold visited the villages of Maidu and Konkow where he obtained the blanket. The dates of Ringold's and Voznesenskii's expeditions, 1841, coincide. Both travelers obtained feather blankets. Konkow blankets in the MAE more closely resemble Maidu blankets published in Ch. Willough's article and K. Fiest's book, than feather blankets of Maka Indians of the northwest coast of North America.

The history of feather mantelets of the California Collection of the MAE is closely connected with the ethnography of Konkow Indians and the collections I. G. Voznesenskii, but not of the J. Cook and K. Buhm collection as it was traditionally stated before. The history of the blankets is also connected with Russian America and Fort Ross, which can be considered as the El Dorado of Russian ethnographic science of the nineteenth century.



MERCEDES CALL'S GARDEN

by Marci Hoard, Park Aide

I have now been volunteering in the historic garden for four years - constantly researching in the Fort Ross Visitor Center Library which has a great collection of historic information on Mercedes Call. I have been enjoying the garden on a weekly basis after my time as a maintenance worker for Fort Ross State Park. It is a lovely way to end my day in the park. People stroll by and it gives me a chance to inform them of the talent and love Mercedes had for her garden. People always comment on how beautiful the garden smells - a spirit of Mercedes that lives on because she loved plants that flowered and smelled good! I have been gardening with other volunteers and following state and FRIA approved plans to bring Mercedes's garden back to its full beauty. If you are interested in volunteering time please call or leave a message at 847-3249. My volunteer days vary, but fall on either Sunday, Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday after my maintenance work is done at 3:30 p.m. Happy Spring!

Mercedes Call in her garden



CALL HOUSE GARDEN RESTORATION

Horticultural History Preserved at Fort Ross State Historic Park

by Mary Lynn Gauthier

I am always amazed at this tiny climate zone. Everyone who comes is touched by the serenity of balmy sunshine in the lee of the wind. Even fogs seem to sail high overhead and slip away. There is an enveloping sense of well being for plants, animals and humans. Since the 1880's gardeners have been coming. The flocks of hummingbirds (occasionally albino) and sunning lizards feel its comforts from roosts on the fences. The monarch butterflies also stop by the hundreds and compliment the flower colors and patterns for awhile. When I'm tired I rest on the porch steps and catch the view over the garden and the bluff and out to sea, listening to the sea lions, and I feel at peace.

My second most favorite position is sitting on the warm pebbles of the ornate formal paths and pulling weeds from the rich black soil with the sun on my back and cool sea breezes on my face. This site was well selected and the original gardener Mrs. Mercedes Call, wife and mother and Chilean expatriot, must have selected it with her husband for all of the same reasons. And how her beloved plants responded! Lush roses, fuchsia, iris, daisies, violets, pelargoniums, lilies, datura, forsythia, heliotrope reflect the passion Mercedes had for plant collection and horticulture, the rich conditions of this garden environment and the love of many gardeners for this Eden.

We know from a survey by the Fort Ross Interpretive Association in 1970 that over 40 fuchsia varieties and more than 90 roses survived. This month we have confirmed through work by Debra Locatell that the majority of those roses found were varieties from 1850 to 1899. Another half dozen are classified as "ancient" and several others are from 1900 to 1920. This includes our still prospering collection of roses brought from St. Petersburg by Princess Helena via sleigh over Siberia and ship from Sitka. That trip took most of 1836-38. The plants were established in her garden outside Fort Ross, adjacent the future Call Garden during her stay from 1838-41.

However most of the historic plants and garden design reflect the personality of Mercedes Call. The phenomenal breadth of her collection was known while she was alive. Mercedes was a gregarious and well traveled lady who collected and traded plants on voyages to revisit Chile, and also had friendly ship's captains bringing her plants from their travels when they called at Fort Ross. She practiced hybridization of pelargoniums and others long before it became commonplace. Gardener acquaintances included the family at what is now Oolampali State Historic Park, Luther Burbank and Gertrude Atherton. She became a charter member of the California Fuchsia Society. The ethno botanists would very much enjoy the history of how this collection of plants got from locale to locale, with whom and why. We don't know where Mercedes found the exotic black calla lily. We do know she explored

the culture and uses of native plants as well as many domesticated herbs and flowers. Plants like the double white datura were valued for form, fragrance and use.

Over the years since the California Parks Department acquired the Fort Ross site and the Call Ranch House and Garden next door, the original garden has experienced periods of care and neglect. Unable or unmotivated, parks does not allocate funds for the Call Garden. We are trying to change that. Support now comes entirely from volunteers, donations and fundraisers.

We are happy to report higher volunteer participation this year. Patty Swengel of Sea Gal Landscaping in Gualala has given a wonderful donation of professional guidance, labor and volunteer training as well as help with supplies, plants and maintenance. Anyone who would like to work with her and learn a lot can come out at 10:00 a.m. on the first Sunday of the month.

We are also delighted to have a nearby rose expert volunteering regular maintenance days. This is Deborah Locatell who has moved up from southern California where she was very important to the head gardener of the Huntington Museum's rose collection. If you would like to work with her and learn a lot, she'll be working on the fourth Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m.

Backstopping this writer (new committee chair) with her duties is Doni Tunheim who brings many years of experience with plants and her own recent restoration projects. Then there are the 20 or so other people who also love the place, like to mess around in the dirt, and come out when they can; good company seems to get them out more. We hope regularly scheduled work days with nice people make it more likely we see them often.

Of course we are also developing funds to keep this garden alive including the upcoming HOME SWEET HOME benefit tour. Plans for ongoing maintenance include hopes to propagate and sell to the public cuttings from this remarkable collection. We are slowly implementing the plant restoration plan developed by Fort Ross Interpretive Association in 1985 and approved by Call family descendants and the Parks Department.

You too can visit to "feel the magic" by arrangement or during the HOME SWEET HOME tour.

To quote the original source Mercedes Call for whom "her garden was her joy. When she was asked during her 26 years of widowhood if she were not sometimes lonely, Merce quickly and emphatically answered 'Never, so long as I can be with my flowers!'" (*The Caretakers* by Kaye Tomlin)

BOOK REVIEWS

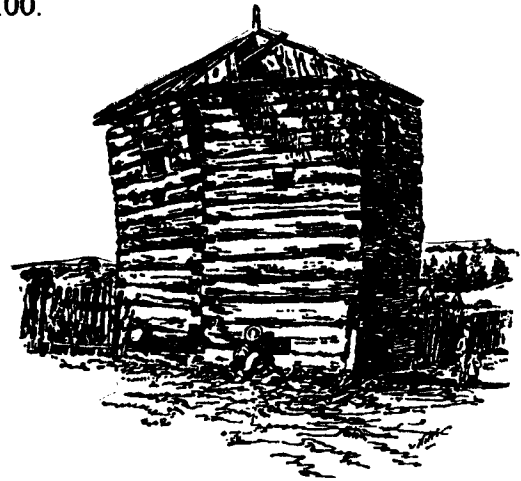
The University of Alaska Press 1995 Catalogue of Publications features several tantalizing titles which will be available in the Fort Ross Bookstore:

Journals of the Priest Ioann Veniaminov in Alaska, 1823 to 1836. Introduction and commentary by S. A. Mousalimas; translated by Jerome Kisslinger. These twelve journals comprise formal reports by Ioann (Ivan) Veniaminov to his diocesan office at Irkustsk, written while he was assigned to the Unalaska parish and to the Novo-Arkhangel'sk (Sitka) parish. The journal entries locate villages, provide insights into village leadership, describe travel routes and conditions, and specify modes of transportation. They also contain significant accounts regarding the Nushagak region Yepiit, as well as a description of Fort Ross and the newly independent Republic of California. Veniaminov's range of interests was broad and he pursued them with boundless energy. While performing the normal duties of an orthodox parish priest, he found time for carpentry and raising a family. He not only learned to read and write Aleut, but he soon was busy compiling a grammar text and a dictionary. His interests also extended to the protection of threatened species and caring for the natural environment. *Rasmuson Library Historical Translation Series, 1993, paper, \$17.50, 220 pages.*

Notes on Russian America. Part I: Novo-Arkhangel'sk. K. T. Khlebnikov. Translated by Svetlana G. Fedorova. Translated from the Russian edition of 1985 by Serge LeComte and Richard Pierce. This work contains extensive commentaries and is a fundamental and essential work for researchers in several fields and Northwest Coast history buffs. Contains a glossary and indices of geographic and ethnic terms and personal names. Limestone Press No. 43, 1995, cloth, 308 pages, \$30.00.

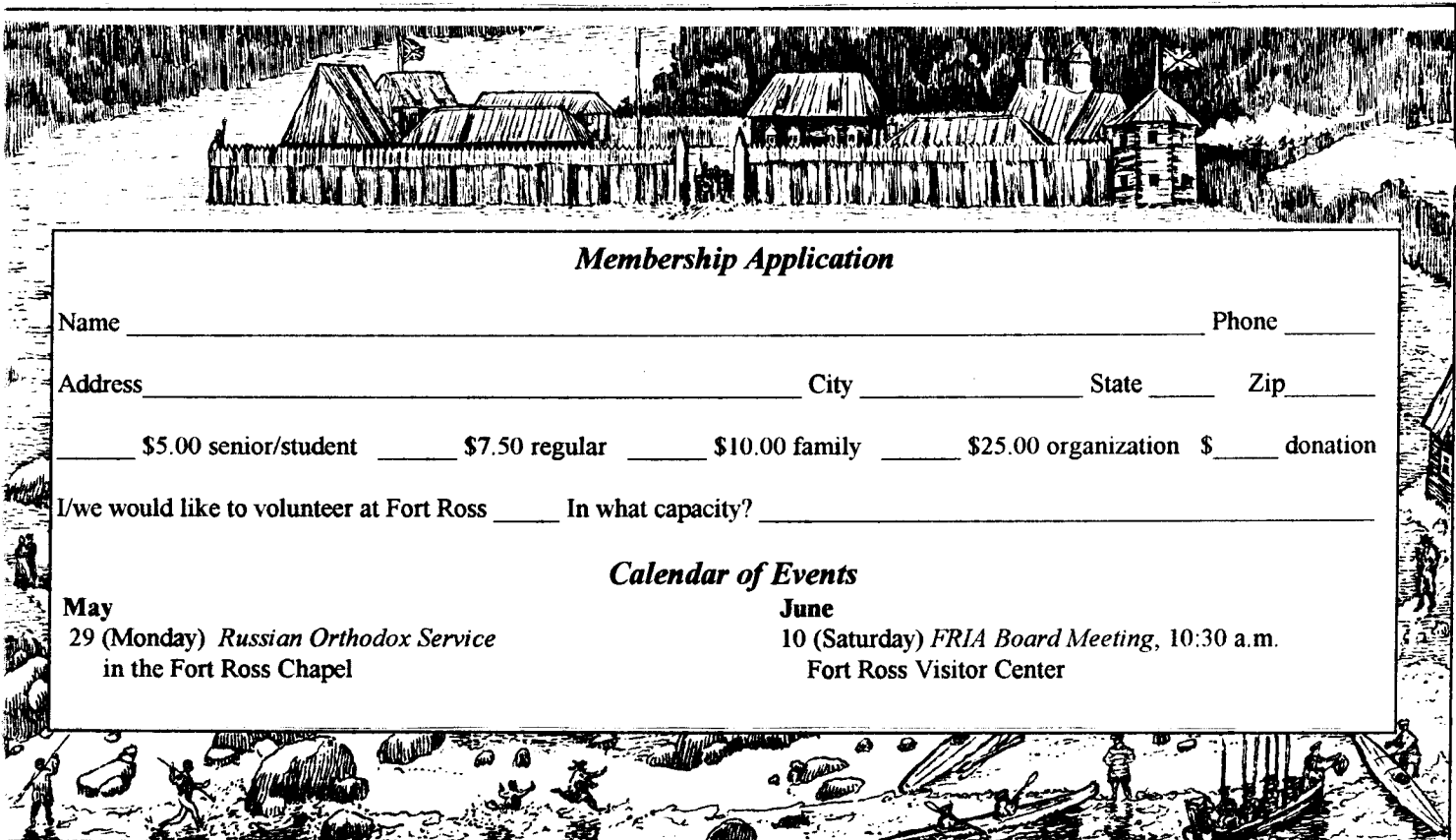
Notes on Russian America. Parts II-V: Kad'iak, Unalashka, Atkha, the Pribylovs. Translated by Roza Liapunova and Svetlana G. Fedorova. Translated from the Russian edition of 1979 by Larina Ramsay. An encyclopedic description of Russian America in the period from 1818 to 1832. As manager of the Novo-Arkhangel'sk (Sitka) office

of the Russian-American Company, Khlebnikov was second only to the governor in authority. Traveling throughout the colonies on inspection tours, working from company records now lost, Khlebnikov compiled a unique account of the regional administration, resources, trade, shipping, exploration, native cultures, and Russian-native relations. Consolidating several versions of Khlebnikov's account, Liapunova and Fedorova transcribed parts II (on Kodiak), III (on Unalashka and part of the Alaska Peninsula), IV (on Atkha, the Andreianov, Rat, Near Islands), and V (on the Pribilof and St. Mathew Islands, and part of the Alaska mainland), in a volume published in Moscow in 1979. Contains a glossary and indices of geographic and ethnic terms and personal names. Limestone Press No. 42, 1995, cloth, 424 pages, \$30.00.



Lieutenant Zagoskin's Travels in Russian America, 1842-1844. The first Ethnographic and Geographic Investigations in the Yukon and Kuskokwim Valleys of Alaska. Edited by Henry N. Michael. Naval Lieutenant Lavrentiy Alekseyevich Zagoskin traveled into the depths of the Alaskan territory, and his reports were the earliest detailed accounts of the natural conditions of the country and the distribution and life of the Indians and Eskimos. The expedition of Zagoskin constitutes one of the most remarkable pages in the history of Russian exploration during the first half of the nineteenth century. Published for the Arctic Institute of North America by University of Toronto Press. Limited quantity available. 1967, cloth, 358 pages, b/w photos, tables, maps, \$50.00.

all reviews by University of Alaska Press



Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

_____ \$5.00 senior/student _____ \$7.50 regular _____ \$10.00 family _____ \$25.00 organization \$ _____ donation

I/we would like to volunteer at Fort Ross _____ In what capacity? _____

Calendar of Events

May

29 (Monday) *Russian Orthodox Service*
in the Fort Ross Chapel

June

10 (Saturday) *FRIA Board Meeting, 10:30 a.m.*
Fort Ross Visitor Center

Fort Ross Interpretive Association

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Mission of the Fort Ross Interpretive Association

The mission of the Fort Ross Interpretive Association, Inc. is to promote for the benefit of the public the interpretive and educational activities of the California Park Service and Fort Ross State Historic Park.

- ◆ To enhance and conserve the interpretive and educational resources of Fort Ross State Historic park, as well as those of the State Park Service.
- ◆ To sponsor, publish, distribute, and sell appropriate items which increase visitor understanding and appreciation of Fort Ross State Historic Park.
- ◆ To acquire materials and equipment for the use in the educational and interpretive programs of Fort Ross State Historic Park.
- ◆ To develop and maintain a library.
- ◆ To preserve historical material associated with Fort Ross State Historic Park, and to provide and maintain adequate and secure storage facilities in an archivally sound environment.
- ◆ To sponsor, support, and assist scientific research and investigations relating to Fort Ross and presentation of these studies to the public. To promote interpretation that reflects current research..
- ◆ To plan, organize, and implement fund raising programs to support the interpretive and educational activities of Fort Ross State Historic Park and of the State Park Service.

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