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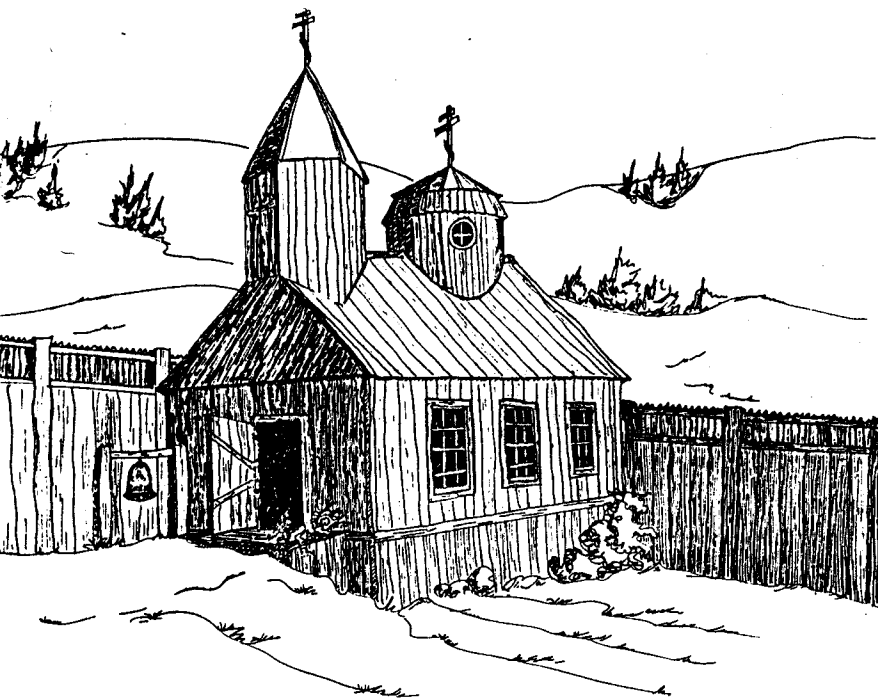
Fort Ross and Salt Point parks have benefited greatly from many dedicated volunteers and staff who have given generously to these parks. Board of directors from FRIA and FRC have fundraised, organized events, overseen volunteers, spearheaded interpretation and restoration projects, and offered substantial 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 Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) and California State Park cooperating association, connects people to the history and beauty of Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks. © Fort Ross Conservancy, 19005 Coast Highway One, Jenner, CA 95450, [707-847-3437](tel:707-847-3437) www.fortross.org



FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION
 NEWSLETTER
 SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER
 1990

RUSSIAN AMERICA THROUGH SOVIET EYES
 Saturday, November 3, 1:00-2:00p.m.

Fort Ross Visitor Center

A presentation by Nikolai N. Bolkhovitinov of the Institute of History, USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow. Dr. Bolkhovitinov is the author of several books on early U.S. - Russian Relations, including his new work on the sale of Alaska. He has also published documents on Ivan Kuskov's early explorations along the Sonoma Coast and on Kuskov's correspondence with Alexander Baranov, his superior in Alaska.

LIVING HISTORY DAY 1990

On July 28, 1990 Fort Ross State Park held its ninth annual Living History Day (L.H.D.). Approximately one hundred dedicated costumed participants portrayed life at Fort Ross as it was in 1838 when Alexander Rotchev was General Manager of Ross. The day was a great success with excellent and unique living history for the visitors, and record breaking visitation for the Park. The day meant many things to many people, and a fine time was shared by all. Here are some memories I have from L.H.D. '90.

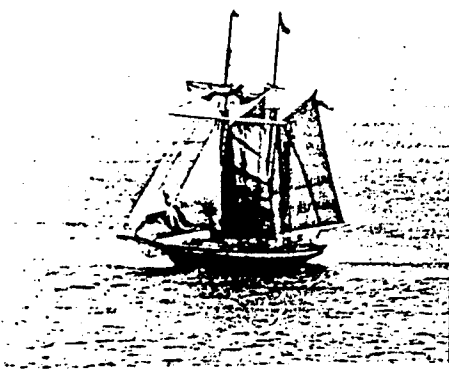
At first light through heavy fog, the white tents of the Hudson Bay Company encampment could be seen on the bluff outside the stockade wall. The H.B.C. had come to trade with Fort Ross. There were several seasoned traders displaying pelts, blankets, beads and many other valued trade items. Visitors enjoyed the hospitality and history shared by the H.B.C. members.

As the sally port opened that misty morning curious tourists passed by the sentry and were greeted by the active and colorful nineteenth century Russian community within the stockade. Outside the Official's Barracks women in swirling sarafans and scarf clad heads worked together to prepare a Russian feast, including some nineteen authentic dishes from borscht and piroshki to lososina and kasha. A whole pig was roasted by the cooks and the meals were excellent. Inside the Official's Barracks tea was served from the samovar in Russian style and the baker prepared and baked black bread in the Russian oven. The tinsmith and wood worker were in their workshops demonstrating their skills.



Between the Official's Barracks and the South Blockhouse several crafts people gathered to demonstrate many nineteenth century crafts. Visitors were encouraged to pound nails on the forge, hand dip candles with the candle maker, sit and create a reed basket, or make a redwood peg. Children really seemed to enjoy this part of hands on living history.

Outside the Rotchev House under the apple trees, women spun wool on a spinning wheel, and by hand with spindles. The balls of yarn would later become blankets, rugs or other items for personal use or trade. Inside the Rotchev House, the only original building remaining at Ross and perhaps with the richest Russian spirit, the mood was right to sit and listen to Russian folktales and legends being told by a Slavic peasant woman. Visitors listened attentively as the characters and stories were brought to life.



The men's Slavyanka Chorus made their annual appearance at L.H.D., giving two fine performances, one in the Chapel singing liturgical songs of the Russian Orthodox Church, and one in the Kuskov House singing traditional Russian folksongs. Those fortunate enough to hear them were impressed by their unique sound.

One of the major highlights of the day was the arrival of the tall ship "The Californian". The ship sailed up from Rumiantsev Bay as a Russian American Company ship, flying the flag of the double headed eagle. It was spotted far off to the south with bone white sails emerging through the fog. It slowly glided over the calm gray ocean towards Ross. As the vessel drew closer there was a stir of excitement from the residents of Ross. The ship fired her cannon four times and the Fort Ross Militia returned with a cannon firing each time from the south blockhouse. The captain of the ship presented Fort Ross with documents from St. Petersburg, and news from Siberia and Sitka. After a short visit the ship set sail for the south.

Mexican Officials arrived on horseback. They had come with orders from the Governor in Monterey. Those at Fort Ross were to abandon their settlement and return to their mother country Russia, as the land they had settled on had been claimed for Spain. Rotchev explained Fort Ross posed no threat to Spanish California, and this matter would be settled by the Governors in Alaska and Monterey. Since a solution would take time, both parties agreed to trade. The Mexicans had livestock and wheat to trade for a list of items including black powder, musket balls and firearms. The Fort Ross Militia gave a musket demonstration to show the quality of their trade goods. The Mexican Officials were pleased and trade continued.

Later in the afternoon a festive group of folkdancers gathered near the accordion player. They formed a circle and danced the Troika and the Korabushka, two traditional Russian folkdances. Visitors joined in on the second round and everyone flirted shamelessly.

The closing ceremonies included one last blast from the Militia, the musket firing by the Women's Auxiliary Militia, and the lowering of the flag. Soon after the Fort Ross gates were closed, and the Russian feast began. L.H.D. participants celebrated a fine day of living history in the Fort Ross spirit. An excellent meal and great company made for a pleasant reward for the days hard work. Thanks to all those who participated and helped make this day so successful. Don't forget to mark your calendar for L.H.D. '91, last Saturday in July.

Todd Kellog



TEAM ROSS II, ALASKAN ARCHAEOLOGY ADVENTURE

"Kachemak, Koniag, dig a little bone, Three Saints Bay was our new home."

During our relatively short yet eventful visit to Kodiak Island, a great deal of pertinent information was gathered and numerous beneficial contacts were made. At K.A.N.A. (Kodiak Area Native Association) we met with Joe Kelley, Vicki Sullivan and Fred Clark and the obvious Irish Eskimo jokes were exchanged, we got down to business. At this meeting we examined some excellent photographs of turn of the century Kodiak and Aleutian people and landscapes. We arranged to have these photos duplicated and the copies will soon be on display in the Fort Ross Visitor Center. We also arranged to have historically accurate replicas of native masks, hats, games and tools made for display and demonstration. In fact, as I write I'm feeling the effects of the use of one of these which just arrived. When in Alaska, I asked Joe Kelley to take my hand and arm measurements and make a throwing board, used by natives to hurl darts at sea mammals. I never realized how much I'd enjoy the use of this ancient hunting tool. From the moment I unwrapped it, all day, I practiced. I don't think any local marine mammals should have to worry, but I'm feeling kind of Koniag. However, did they get blisters like these?

Also soon to arrive are a bentwood hunting hat and Koniag masks made by Jim Dillard. These will augment the collection of articles of basketry and handcrafts we brought back earlier. All of these items and the knowledge we gained we will share with visitors, especially Environmental Living Participants, to further interpret the role of the native Alaskans in the lifeways of Colony Ross. Thanks to all our Alaskan friends for their help and hospitality.

Dan Murley/Lyn Kalani

Editor's Note: Kachemack was an early culture preceding the Koniag lifestyle on Kodiak Island. Three Saints Bay was the location of Grigory Shelikov's first permanent Russian settlement on Kodiak Island in 1784. Also the sight of the Archaeological excavation in which we participated.



KONIAG SAND PIPER MASK and BENTWOOD HAT

ALASKAN ARCHAEOLOGY ADVENTURE

Dan Murley, Kent Lightfoot, Lyn Kalani and I travelled to Three Saints Bay, Kodiak Island, Alaska to work on an archaeology dig at the site of the first permanent settlement in Russian America. The U.C. Berkeley Field School, at this site under the direction of Aron Crowell, archaeologists from the Kodiak Area Native Association, Rick Knecht, Fred Clark and students, and Russian archaeologists from Sakhalin Island, Valery O. Shubin, Sergei Vadimovich Tkachenko, Olga Alekseevna Shubina and translator Yuri all worked together at this site.

I want to thank FRIA for my trip to Alaska. We learned a great deal. Kent Lightfoot is an excellent teacher. Besides the archaeology we were a part of, we made invaluable personal connections. The Russian archaeologists, the Alaskan archaeologists and the Berkeley crew, along with Team Ross II formed a bond of mutual respect and knowledge. Future meetings, information and cultural exchanges are in the works. In Kodiak and Anchorage Lyn did a wonderful job contacting artists and historians.

I would like to share a few highlights of our trip. At the Kodiak airport Kent, Lyn, Dan and myself met Valery Shubin, the Russian archaeologist who has been working a Russian American Company settlement site in the Kurile Islands since 1978. We had the experience of flying together in a World War II Goose pontoon plane. It was an exhilarating ride over green mountains and lakes. We looked, but saw no Kodiak Bears from our plane. After a smooth landing, we were greeted by the Berkeley students, Aron Crowell, and the rest of the Russian group. We thought they were so happy to see us, but they wanted their mail! Team Ross and the Russians immediately began exchanging information and a strong bond was formed between all of us. Gifts were exchanged and, I believe, a strong foundation for the future was built in that meeting.

Our days began with breakfast at 8:00, to the dig by 9:00, and eight hours of work, with a lunch break. The site we were digging may have been Shelikhov's house at this site of the first permanent Russian settlement in Russian America. A tidal wave wiped out this settlement and a move was made to what is now Kodiak City. Since we were there when the summer solstice occurred, we spent many days and nights awake longer than usual. It was incredible to see daylight until 2:00 a.m., when someone would invariably say "What time is it?".

The Three Saints Bay site was full of information, the data collected from artifacts found will be analyzed and conclusions made at a later date by experts in the field. We will keep you informed.

Doreen Ferguson/Lyn Kalani



Yuri, Olga, Lyn, Doreen, Dan, Valery, Kent, Sergei



IT'S OFFICIAL
INTERPRETIVE SPECIALISTS IN THE FORT

Beginning October 3, 1990 costumed
Interpretive Specialists will be
working in the Fort six days a week,
Thursdays through Tuesdays.



COSTUME SYMPOSIUM



Hello,

I am writing to tell you about a symposium I will be
addressing next month that may be of interest to your members.
The Costume Society of America will be giving a symposium on
reproduction clothing for living history programs in Sacramento.
It will be hosted by the Sutter's Fort Interpretive Association
on Saturday, September 15. Joan Severa, former curator of
costumes, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and I will be
speaking about how we have researched and costumed living history
programs and how others such as Williamsburg and Old Sturbridge
Village do it. There will be information on sources of patterns,
fabrics and other supplies, and we will be stressing the
importance of authenticity and research. For more information
please contact: Melissa Leventon

Assistant Curator, Textiles
M.H. de Young Memorial Museum
Golden Gate Park
San Francisco, CA 94118
(415) 750-3600

I would be very grateful if you could announce this
symposium in your newsletter. Thanks so much.

Sincerely,

David Rickman

VISITORS FROM THE SOVIET UNION

On August 20th award winning photographer from Siberia, Evgeniy E. Shley, visited Fort Ross with Judy Thomas and 15 other people who were mostly from Siberia. They were given a tour of the Fort and a cannon demonstration by Doreen Ferguson a.k.a. Dasha. Gifts were exchanged by all. Evgeniy's photographs of Siberia are on loan to FRIA and are on display in the Visitor Center Auditorium.

Another recent visit was recorded by E. Breck Parkman, Regional Archaeologist: "On June 29, 1990, three anthropologists from the Soviet Union visited Fort Ross State Historic Park. The three visitors were Igor Dubov, Director of the Leningrad Ethnographic Museum, Elena Tsareva, the Museum's Head Curator, and Vladimir Dmitriev, the Museum's Chief Archaeologist. The three were visiting California as part of a month-long Russian cultural exhibit at Fort Mason in San Francisco. Accompanying the Soviet visitors to Fort Ross were a number of staff members of the Jesse Peter Museum at Santa Rosa Junior College, and from Ya-Ka-Ama. Local Pomo Indians from nearby Kashaya Rancheria and from the Manchester Indian Reservation were also in attendance, and treated the visitors to a luncheon that included traditional foods like fried seaweed. Afterwards, the visitors were given a V.I.P. tour of the Fort by Assistant to the Superintendent, Antone Duncan, and Unit Ranger, Bill Walton. Ranger Walton was dressed in period costume, as was Maintenance Supervisor, Bill Mennell, and Park Aide, Denise Abbott, the three of whom conducted an interpretive canon-firing that really shook the Fort! State Archaeologist, Dr. Glenn Farris, and Regional Archaeologist, Breck Parkman, were on hand to answer the visitors' questions concerning the park's former and current archaeological investigations. At the end of their visit, the visitors were presented with small gifts from the Fort Ross staff. As they left, they extended an invitation to the park staff to visit their Fort Mason exhibit so that they could return the favor shown them at Fort Ross...

FORT ROSS STAFF VISITS SOVIET CULTURAL EXHIBIT "On July 17, 1990, an unofficial delegation of off-duty Fort Ross SHP staff travelled to San Francisco in order to visit a cultural exhibit from the Soviet Union. The exhibit, held at Fort Mason, was from the Ethnographic Museum of Leningrad. An invitation to visit the exhibit had come from Elena Tsareva, Head Curator of the Leningrad Museum, when she and other Soviet anthropologists had visited Fort Ross the previous month. Thirteen park employees - family members, and volunteers visited the Soviet exhibit, including Bill Walton (State Park Ranger I), Bill Mennell (Park Maintenance Supervisor), Michael Stephenson (State Park Ranger II), Denise Abbott (Park Aide), Todd Kellogg (Park Aide), Anne Ryan (Dispatch Clerk), Breck Parkman (Regional Archaeologist), and Lyn Kalani (Fort Ross Interpretive Association). The exhibit was wonderful, and a good time was had by all." Notes on this visit also by E. Breck Parkman.

Elena Tsareva presented Fort Ross with two beautiful linden bark dolls dressed in traditional clothing. They are now on display in the Fort Ross Bookstore.

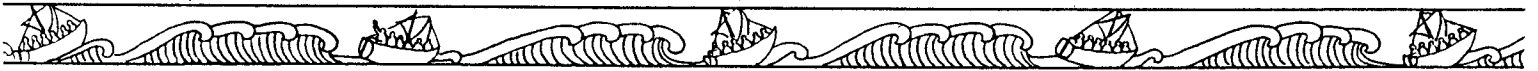


Soviet Visitors and Park Staff at Fort Ross
Antone Duncan, Igor Dubov, Elena Tsareva,
Bill Walton, Denise Abbott, Bill Mennell,
and Vladimir Dmitriev.

SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE OF SHIPBUILDING AT FORT ROSS

Jim Allan of the University of California Berkeley Anthropology Department has been spending a lot of time at Fort Ross recently. He is writing his Master's Thesis in Maritime History and Underwater Research for East Carolina University and working on his Ph.D. at Berkeley in Underwater Archaeology. At Fort Ross he is looking for evidence of shipbuilding activity at the Cove. He would like to determine how the ships were built and whether the methods of shipbuilding were typical of 19th Century shipbuilding practices or whether they differed because of the frontier environment.

Jim is searching for evidence of shipways (the structure supporting a ship during construction). If ships were built as they were in the 19th Century there should be pilings where the shipway was. To determine the location of these pilings he has been conducting a magnetometer survey of the beach. The disturbances of pilings should register in this survey. Although nothing has yet been located, the preliminary survey indicates a promising area between the end of the road and the water. There has been a problem with too much magnetic interference and another survey needs to be done with different magnetometer configurations.



CEMETERY RESTORATION PROJECT UPDATE

Under the direction of Dr. Lynne Goldstein, the archaeological field class from the University of Wisconsin began working on the Cemetery restoration project in July. The project started slowly with traditional archaeological field methods. Due to the very difficult digging conditions and the graves being more than four feet underground, there was a move to heavy equipment to remove the overburden. During the last weeks of the project more than forty graves were found and significant finds were discovered in a few, including a Russian Junior Naval officer with uniform buttons intact. All human remains will be reinterred in the future. A more complete report will follow in a later newsletter.

WORK UNDERWAY ON THE CALL HOUSE FOUNDATION

The John A. Dodson Company is currently working to stabilize the Call House foundation. They will also be replacing insect and dry rotted damaged wood, leveling and increasing support. Work should be completed by the end of September. Mr. Michael Shapiro has been assigned as the State's Representative for this contract.

NOTES FROM KAYE TOMLIN

A couple of things that you might want to share with the Newsletter readership have come up recently.

First, I have found the date the record eucalyptus (Blue Gum) tree was planted by George Washington Call. It was in 1878, the same year the Call House was completed. That puts the tree's age at 122 years!

Second, after the FRIA meeting, Frieda and I took a walk in the Benitz orchard with John and Margaret Smith to see if we could find any of the five apple trees that were identified by myself and Linda Stainbrook (who did the Fort Ross Orchards report for Parks & Recreation) in 1979. Surprisingly, we found four of them; we didn't go to the spot where the fifth one was, so it too may have survived. One of the trees was laying down but still growing, being about fifty feet long and sticking up into other trees some twenty feet. All four of the trees had apples on them, although they were of small size. It is amazing to realize that these fruit trees, although younger than the few remaining originals in the Russian Orchard, are still growing about 130 years after they were planted (which was about 1859-60).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FRIA BOARD MEETING -- Saturday, October 13

ENVIRONMENTAL LIVING PROGRAM TEACHER WORKSHOP --Saturday and Sunday, October 13, 14

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