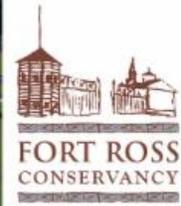


JULY 2018



Fort Ross & Salt Point News

Dear friends of Fort Ross and Salt Point,

We're just a few days away from [Fort Ross Festival](#), our annual outdoor bash that brings together our wide and wonderfully diverse Fort Ross / Metini community. This year we've got a record-number of activities in the fort compound, with hands-on crafts, MAS wrestling, live Russian and Americana music, and thanks to tremendous support from California State Parks, the return of the **Fort Ross militia and cannon firing**. Profit from FRC's food and beer sales goes to FRC's Youth Education Fund to ensure more students have access to [quality outdoor education](#). It's sure to be a rousing day spent in good company. [See our website](#) for the program and more details.



Our awesome Volunteer Coordinator Melissa could still use a few more capable hands to pull this community event together. Interested? [Email Melissa](#) to see what's needed. Your time volunteering means we waive the entrance fee and you do good for the fort!

We're also bringing **Fort Ross Kitchen Diplomacy** to Festival by launching our first-ever Borscht Cook-off. We welcome home cooks to bring a pot of their favorite family recipe to share, with prizes awarded for the best borscht of the day. If all goes well maybe a TV cooking show will follow. [Details available.](#)

Looking forward!

Sarah Sweedler
Fort Ross Conservancy CEO
sarahs@fortross.org

RUSSIAN COOKING - A Journey Across The Ocean



We are thrilled to offer for sale *Russian Cooking – A Journey Across the Ocean* and grateful to Transneft for researching, publishing, and making it available to us. This beautiful book compiles recipes preserved by the families and communities of Russian emigrants in the USA. *Russian Cooking* is richly illustrated with line drawings, historic photographs, and old-style advertisements. The bilingual Russian-English text offers recipes and techniques as well as anecdotes of the Russian experience coming to America.



Limited quantities available at the Fort Ross Book Shop, this is one cookbook equally at home on your coffee table or your kitchen.

FORT ROSS FESTIVAL - Saturday July 28th



We are gearing up for the annual Fort Ross Festival on July 28th. Our big summer celebration brings together the many aspects of Fort Ross from Alaska Native, Kashia Pomo, Russian, Siberian and ranch history, to marine ecology and living history. We welcome all people and interests at Fort Ross!

We are looking forward to spending the day with visitors from around the world. We are especially thankful to our volunteers who help us pull off the event in a unique and fun-filled way, year after year.

Get ready for a bang! Our militia volunteers will be working closely with California State Parks to bring back the cannon and musket firing this year! Come for the cannons and stay for the borscht! It is our first try at a Borscht Cook-off. We hope you try a taste and cast your vote. If you are interested in submitting a pot of borscht email me directly to confirm your involvement. We have a large variety of craft demonstrations and tutorials including needle felting, wool spinning, wheat weaving, Pysansky egg dyeing, blacksmiths, coopers, surveyors, woodworkers, and carpenters. We have a craft

marketplace this year with Kashia jewelry, paintings, felted goods, brooms, and handmade dolls. We have many great performers lined up. The beer garden will no doubt be a popular place to eat, drink, and listen to some great local musicians. Across the way from the beer garden we are excited to highlight the natural history of the fort by welcoming visitors to partake in marine mammal viewing off the bluffs overlooking the beautiful Sonoma coast. In the auditorium of the visitor center California State Parks will be giving a presentation on an interesting story regarding the Pomona sign that lived on the roof of the Call House for many years dating back to the Call family. All of this and much much more will make for a wonderful event! We hope you join us!

-[Melissa Bushner](#), Volunteer Coordinator

ONGOING FORT ROSS PROJECTS



Fort Ross has been bustling with activity this season. California State Parks and FRC coordinated efforts to replace the broken crosses and repair the cupola on the Fort Ross chapel. The chapel bell support failed and has now been replaced so that the Fort Ross bell can once again ring loud and clear. up and running!



The FRC volunteer windmill team is rebuilding the broken mill blade and they plan to get it operational in time for Fort Ross Festival. And California State Parks has renovated the trail from Sandy Cove to the Fort Ross cemetery. It takes a village to keep a historic park up and running!

SALT POINT PARK ACTIVITIES



On the weekends there are **Junior Ranger** programs and **Family Hikes**. Check for flyer announcements on the kiosks upon arrival.

Look out for **tide pool forays** led by our tide pool expert, at the new moon and the full moon (July 28th).

Saturday Night Campfire Program on the 21st will be held at the Woodside Hike & Bike area from 7:30pm-8:30pm. "Animals in the Park" is the theme with puppets, songs and more. Informative fun for the whole family.

Sunday Junior Ranger Programs "Into The Forest" will be meeting at the Woodside Day Use parking lot at 10am on July 22 & 29 for a one hour hike. 5-10 yr. olds.

STELLER'S JAY: WHAT'S IN A NAME?



Over the past month, many visitors from near and far have stopped in at the Fort Ross Visitor Center and asked some variant of the question, "What's that blue bird with the black head and mohawk?!" For those of us who've spent a lot of time around these parts, we know of course they're describing the local Steller's jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*). A bird easily recognizable by its largely blue body, black head and crest -- not to mention its loud, squawking vocalizations and a tendency to lurk in the trees and bushes near picnic tables for a chance at an easy meal! Now, while you may be familiar with this commonly spotted bird. You may, however, not be aware that this bird

species was named after the German naturalist Georg Wilhelm Steller. Steller was the first European to record this species, not to mention a number of others, including the Steller's sea lion (another resident at Fort Ross); the Steller's eider; the Steller's sea eagle; and sadly, the now extinct, Steller's sea cow.

The stories of Georg Steller's explorations and discoveries are vast and great -- and forever linked to the history of Fort Ross. During Steller's travels of scientific discovery, he found himself in Russia, serving briefly as a surgeon in the Russian army. It was in 1741 that he met the now famous Danish explorer and cartographer Vitus Bering. Through this meeting, Steller got a place aboard the *St. Peter*, a ship captained by Bering set to explore new lands. This expedition resulted in the European discovery of Alaska -- and its wealth of valuable furs, including the most valuable: sea otter fur. Steller's role in the discoveries of Alaskan flora and fauna ended up playing an important part in the history of Russian fur trading. It helped lead to Russia's expansion into Alaska, which in turn led to the establishment of the Russian settlement: Fort Ross.

So, what's in a name? Well turns out quite a lot! Here at Fort Ross, there is no end to the lessons on how things are connected. Cultural history, natural history...it's all related. I hope, like our visitors, you learned a little something about one of our park's flying characters: the Steller's jay.

[More on the Steller's jay](#)

[More on Georg Wilhelm Steller and his discoveries](#)

-- Charon Vilnai, FRC Programs Instructor and Sea Lion Survey Project Lead

Photo credit: U.S Fish and Wildlife Service



Visit our website at WWW.FORTROSS.ORG for details