

MARCH 2018



## Fort Ross & Salt Point News

Dear friends of Fort Ross and Salt Point,

It's wet and messy along the coast, with heavy rain, some flooding, and the occasional downed tree along the road. Not the best day for an outdoor excursion, but we all know brighter days are ahead - starting April 1st, Fort Ross is open for high season seven days a week, and Alaska Native Day and Fort Ross Festival will be here in a heartbeat.

To help us launch into Spring, FRC recently received a generous grant from the Bothin Foundation, a San Francisco foundation whose mission is to connect nonprofit organizations to the tools they need for success. The tool we purchased was a "gator," a sparkly blue four-seater utility vehicle that we'll use to shuttle people and things to all corners of our park and especially to assist visitors who have mobility issues and want to access our programming. The day it arrived at Fort Ross we'd all been cooped up in the office working through our respective piles of paperwork, and with the sun fleetingly out between storms, we decided to take it for a spin. I pulled rank and drove first, heading down towards the compound on rutted old Highway One with all of us hollering like teenagers. That's when when we saw the first whale spout-- so many whales blowing and breaching and so easy to spot just offshore. It never gets old, to witness these 40-foot behemoths making their annual pilgrimage up and down the coast, cruising past modern urban centers like Los Angeles and San Francisco and northward along the pristine coastline of Fort Ross and Salt Point. We stopped to watch them and take in that vast Pacific Ocean, knowing that it will indeed be a good summer season, and hoping you will join us for just such a moment.

- Sarah

Sarah Sweedler  
Fort Ross Conservancy CEO  
[sarahs@fortross.org](mailto:sarahs@fortross.org)



**STARTING APRIL 1<sup>st</sup> FORT ROSS IS OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK!**

### SPRING CELEBRATION

**Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**12 PM - 3:30 PM**  
Fort Ross State Historic Park

Join our Kedry volunteers for the festive "**Verboye Voskresenie**" (Pussy Willow, not Palm) Sunday, a family-friendly holiday featuring traditional



Russian/Slavic ritual and song and fuzzy catkins, welcoming Spring! Symbolic willow walk around the village and lyrical singing while doing crafts.

## ELP OPEN ENROLLMENT - APRIL 1<sup>st</sup>



**Educators, April 1<sup>st</sup> is just around the corner and you know what that means - ELP Open Enrollment!**

Make sure to mark your calendars and set a reminder on your phones as our new online booking calendar will open for reservations at midnight on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Please be careful to read the instructions above the calendar before starting! For questions, please email Song Hunter at [songh@fortross.org](mailto:songh@fortross.org).

## FRC BLOG



### Learning to Prune Fruit Trees

By Melissa McCarthy

I arrived at the historic Fort Ross Orchard on a foggy late-winter day, there was a chill in the air but the winds were calm. I heard cheerful sounds coming from the trees and as I followed the sounds I saw a group of friendly faces under a giant pear tree with branches stretching high into the air. Our dedicated orchard volunteers, led by Susy Rudy, greeted me and introduced me to Keith Park. Keith is a National Park Service horticulturalist, pruner, and arborist.

He works at the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez California, maintaining the orchard and other trees on the parks grounds. He was at Fort Ross to guide us in a pruning workshop. [Read More](#)

## SAVE THE DATE



### Alaska Native Day: May 19<sup>th</sup>

The Fifth Annual Alaska Native Day to celebrate the Alaska Native history at Fort Ross/Metini and to build community among the Alaska Native people. Kayak race, weaving, Tlingit/Haida dancing and drumming story telling, and games.

Come learn about the Alaska Native community at Fort Ross.



## Volunteer Appreciation Day: June 30<sup>th</sup>: 2 PM

It's high time we thank our wonderful volunteers who contribute so much to Fort Ross and Salt Point. Please join us for a festive, casual, and nearly speech-free celebration of our wonderful community who steward the orchard, bring our events to life, survey for plants and animals, and so much more. All volunteers are welcome! Questions? Ready to RSVP? Email Melissa at [melissam@fortross.org](mailto:melissam@fortross.org).



## Fort Ross Festival: June 28<sup>th</sup>

This year's event will highlight the Kashia, Russian, Alaska Native, and California ranch era peoples who have called Fort Ross home over the centuries. We'll offer costumed historical vignettes, hands-on crafts, horse and buggy rides, Russian bell ringing, music & dance from numerous cultures, an international food bazaar — and of course, the Fort Ross Beer Garden! Get your [Eventbrite](#) tickets here.

## REMEMBERING DAN MURLEY



I must report the sad news that Ranger Dan Murley passed away recently at his home in Timber Cove. He was my dear friend and a loving husband to Sandy and father to Hannah and Oona. He moved to California from Worcester Mass, after serving in the US Army in the late 60's.

Dan had many facets like the beads, baskets and bones he so loved. Writer, archaeologist, naturalist, historian, geologist, winemaker, musician, music lover, joker, photographer, birder, SCUBA diver, fisherman, museum curator, friend of native people, ambassador, EMT, peace officer, Irishman...were a few sides of his character. He disliked war, pollution, litter and waste.

He loved Fort Ross and helped protect and interpret its history for over 30 years. He was well known and appreciated by the local community, and has hundreds of friends through the State Park system. His weekly Ranger Reports were thrilling to read. In them he might detail colorful wildlife encounters or describe the smell of newly fallen rain, the clearing of clouds, or the power of the ocean.

I am saddened by his passing, and appreciative of the times we got to spend together solving the world's problems. His best archaeological find was his wife Sandy.

-- Retired Ranger Bill Walton



Visit our website at [WWW.FORTROSS.ORG](http://WWW.FORTROSS.ORG) for details