

# RANCHO BODEGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## **Bodega Bay Through the Years**

*by Adrianus Boudewyn - 2006*

### **Early History:**

Pre-1775 – The area around was inhabited predominantly by the Bodega Miwok, or Olamentko, tribe.

1775 – The Spanish schooner on a mission of exploration under the command of Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Cuadro, discovered the bay that would bear his name.

1809 – A Russian outpost was established at Fort Ross to grow wheat and to hunt sea otter.

### **The Early 1900s:**

1926 – Rum runners and prohibition agents fight it out on the beach near Bodega Bay. The smugglers, apparently believing that they were being attacked by hijackers, escape to sea while the three prohibition agents retreated safely to their car.

1938 – More than a million marketable-sized Pacific oysters from the Orient were growing on the tide flats near the northwestern end of for harvest.

### **1940-1960:**

1941 – Bodega Bay enters a new phase of development with the building of a jetty and dredging of the harbor. This attracted more commercial fishermen to the area, fish companies and new wharves.

1941 – Construction of Bodega Bay's first permanent wharf was underway at the Louis Asman Camp resort on the shores of the popular harbor.

1943 – Meredith Fish Co. builds 9,000 square foot fish processing plant.

1959 – Debate intensifies over the choice of a PG&E nuclear power plant site at Bodega Head, ultimately leading to the plan being abandoned in 1964, after construction was under way.

1960 – Sonoma County adopts revised master plan for the development of Bodega Bay. The plan calls for dredging a broad channel to supplement the federally maintained channel; filling of tidelands on the southern and eastern side of the harbor. There is also provision for leading the "new" land for developments ranging from commercial fishing uses to motels and service stations; and construction of a breakwater along the sea side of the channel.

### **The '60s:**

1961 – Sonoma County deeds to the Coast Guard the 1.7 acre site of the guard's proposed rescue station.

1962 – Alfred Hitchcock films his thriller "the Birds," introducing to the nation to Bodega Bay.

1963 – The National Science Foundation grants \$1,100,000 to develop research and teaching facilities at the new Bodega Marine Laboratory.

## BODEGA BAY THROUGH THE YEARS



1968 – The High Tides restaurant, a fixture in Bodega Bay burns down. It was not rebuilt, but its wharf-level partner, the Low Tides, was expanded and remodeled, and became known as the Tides Wharf.

### **1970-1990:**

1975 – Harbor View, a subdivision of 750 lots, wins approval.

1980s – Improved fishing technology and bigger boats allow fishermen to catch more fish, more quickly than ever before.

1981 – In his final days as president, Jimmy Carter, designates 1,000 square miles of ocean from south to the Farallon islands as the Point Reyes-Farallon Islands National Marine Sanctuary. The sanctuary closes the area to oil and gas exploration and restricts sewage disposal.

1985 – dedicated. The 244-berth, \$8 million marina was largely financed by state and federal grants. Fishermen had worked for more than a decade to get the project approved, and it was one of few developments of its size that received support from all segments of the community.

1988 – Commercial fishermen experience a boom year, with a total catch of more than 14 million pounds, worth more than \$15 million.

### **The '90s:**

1990s – A cycle of warm ocean temperatures triggers a decline in fish populations. Regulators begin limiting the catches of commercial and recreational fishermen.

1995 – The Tides goes upscale, with a new gift shop, deli/fish market and new bar and restaurant where the old fishing dock once stood.

1999 – Worth magazine lists as 244th of the 250 most expensive towns to buy a home in the nation and pegged it with a median home price of \$349,500. It was the only town to make the list.

2001: Bodega Bay experienced its lowest annual total commercial fishing catch on record, with a port total catch of about 2.1 million, worth just over \$3 million.