

# FISHERMAN'S FESTIVAL POSTERS

## Tales of Fish Fest Posters

The annual Fisherman's Festival is a whole community effort and local artists are a part of that. Local artists synthesize the character and culture of the fish fest into an inviting image that says 'come join us'. Fish Fest posters illustrate Bodega Bay's Fisherman's Festival character in vivid and colorful detail. The festival celebrates Bodega Bay's fishing fleet, that has been "Anchored in the Community", for over a century.

In the 1970's, the posters were black and white illustrations of silhouetted boats drawn against familiar shorelines. They transform in later years into beautiful colorful watercolor renderings of fish, crabs, workers onshore, and boats, including the parade of decorated fishing boats (2015) gathering at Fish Fest for the Blessing of the Fleet, to receive prayers of good luck, calm seas, and safe return.

**Imaginative themes in the posters set the stage for good times.** In the 1980's, cartoons were the style with party themes, such as Mariner's Mardi Gras (1981) and a guitar-playing mermaid for the "Harbor Hoedown" (1982). A companion map showed Fish Fest activities spread all around Bodega Harbor, day and night, from the art show at Bodega Harbour Yacht Club on Smith Brother's Road; to the dance at our Grange Hall from 8:30 pm - 2 am!, to the Trap Shoot below the old Fire Station in Porto Bodega, to kite flying, food and fun in Westside Park.



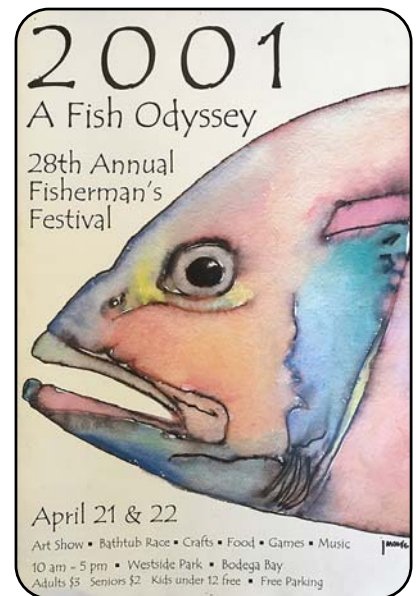
In 1985, the "Jolly Rodger Jamboree" poster exhibits a muscular, smiling pirate with pieces of eight overflowing his treasure chest. The decade finishes with "Nautical Nonsense" (1988) and "Marine Madness!" (1989). "Where There Is Always Something Fishy Going On" (1995),

Humor made an appearance in the year 2000. Catching the mood of the country at the turn of the century, "How and Y2Katch a Fish" brought in the new millennium. In 2001, knowing grins turned to smiles with echoes of the 1970 science fiction film "2001 A Fish Odyssey".

"Fish Full Thinking" (2002) echoed the Fisherman's hopeful wishes for a bountiful harvest, as the colorful watercolor crabs by artist Olga Storms

drifted across the poster, reminding the community of the fishermen's difficult negotiations for a fair price on crab.

**Artists' beautiful watercolors, skillful woodcuts, artful photography.** Janet Moore, as a scientist for NOAA SeaGrant, on the Russian River salmon habitat restoration project at the UC Davis Bodega Marine Lab created "2001 a Fish Odyssey". It portrayed a single, beautifully rendered rockfish head in transparent watercolor. Her painting of a school of brightly colored salmon highlighted the 2005 poster.



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Janet is Fish Fest's most featured artist. She created five posters exhibiting broad talent, combining art with her scientific background and dedication to education. Her posters show a nimble brush in watercolor, transparent acrylics, and talent in graphic design.

Janet's work appears again in 2008 with a historical photograph of Harold Ames Sr. doing the heavy lifting as he pulls crab pots onto his boat, the Sea Farmer. This year, as we celebrate the 50th year of Fisherman's Festival, Janet's 2005 salmon artwork was selected again as the choice for this year's poster.

Among those who we can locate, the talented artists who contributed to the collection and set the tone for the annual Fish Fest came from San Quentin to Sonoma, Petaluma, Santa Rosa and west to Bloomfield and Sebastopol.

Rik Olsen of Sebastopol is a printmaker whose linocut carvings produce incredible illustrations that say so much, creating prints that succinctly and beautifully are worth more than a thousand words. His prints heralded King Salmon and California Fresh Fish in 2007 and 2009.

Often featured on the posters are fishing boats, including the beautiful watercolors by Sarah K. Good (2018) and Bodega Bay artists Jean Warren (2014) and John Hershey (2015). Importantly, through the years, Shona Weir at the Business Services Unlimited shop in Bodega Bay ([www.bodegabaycopy.com](http://www.bodegabaycopy.com)) added the graphic arts on the Fish Fest posters that you'll see at the Tomales History Center from March 19, 2023 through April 30, 2023.



**What fun and food!** The posters display amazing array of pure fun and frolic. Locals remember when the ladies brought their knitting and homemade crafts to sell. The bathtub races gave way to the somewhat "sturdier" wooden boat race that participants manage to build and float on the spot. Other fun included Live Llamas, a Costume Ball, a Toy Balloon Distance Contest, a Kiddie Carnival, Live Music by the Pebbles, Kite Flying, Harbor Tours from the Tides and Marine Lab exhibits. And festive food including local oysters, lamb and beef. And don't forget the ever-popular Fish & Chips!

Fish Fest posters from 1974 to 2023 are on display at the Tomales History Center from mid-March to April 31st.

