

RANCHO BODEGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DID YOU KNOW?

The Chicken Farmers

For a long time Highway 101 ran through downtown Petaluma, but in 1937, after the Golden Gate Bridge was built, the California Highway Commission wanted to build a bypass around the town. Most of the town folks were in favor of the bypass until they learned that the proposed route went through 120 small chicken farms. Colonel John Skeggs, the chief highway engineer, gerrymandered his way through the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, and got his proposed route approved. Enter Max Kortum, a Petaluma chicken farmer. Max led a



Max Kortum

bitter two year battle against Colonel Skeggs. The Highway Commission finally scheduled a hearing in Sacramento, and 500 Sonoma County residents went up to protest the route. Governor Earl Warren ordered the route changed to avoid the chicken farms and Colonel Skeggs disappeared into the shadows of bureaucracy.

A TRIBUTE TO NED JOHN MANTUA

1942-2022

Ned Mantua passed away unexpectedly on February 15, 2022, at the age of 80. He is lovingly remembered by his daughter Tania (John Rohan), sons Mitch, Nate (Christine), and Dominic (Lisa), grandchildren Max, Sofia, Trent, Nicholas and Marina, and his many relatives and friends.

Ned lived his entire life in Bodega and Bodega Bay. He and his parents, Johnny and Irene, lived on their ranch off Valley Ford Freestone Road until he was five, then moved to Bodega Bay. He attended Bodega Bay Elementary School and many of his classmates ended up being his lifelong friends. He went on to Tomales Middle School and Tomales High School where he was active in sports and the senior play and graduated in 1959. He spent one semester at Santa Rosa Junior College, long enough to complete the football season.

Like his mother, most of his working life was tied to the fishing industry. After leaving SRJC he started working as a fish buyer at the Lazio Fish Company. He met Margaret Skelly at a dance in Bloomfield, and they married at age 21. They had their four children in the next five years,



Mantua's HR Tops Good Spot

1966

Catcher Ned Mantua slammed a two-run homer over the left field fence in the fourth inning to snap a 1-1 tie and give the Coast Merchants a 3-1 triumph

Gas station at the Tides

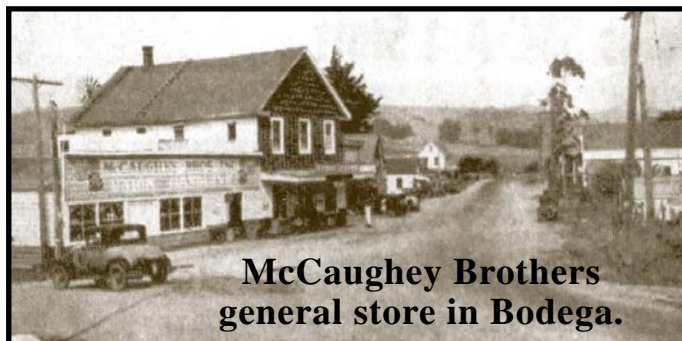


FROM THE ARCHIVES



and Ned left his wharf job to work at McCaughey Brothers general store in Bodega. He bought the business in the late 1970s. In 1985 he moved the store to Bodega Bay, eventually settling in across the street from Spud Point Marina. The business closed in 2000 with the rapidly shrinking fishing industry. He then managed the gas station and convenience store at the Tides, retiring two years ago at age 78.

Ned always loved fishing and hunting, sports, horse races, and playing cards. He started his kids fishing and digging clams as soon as they could walk. He especially loved duck hunting, as a kid on the shores and ponds around Bodega Bay, and later on Estero Americano, Salmon Creek, the Central Valley, and Tule Lake. Ned loved playing baseball, fastpitch and slow-pitch softball, and hung up his cleats once his kids were playing in high school. He loved going to his grandchildren's sporting events and yelling words of encouragement to them and suggestions for the referees. Ned was a lifelong fan of Tomales High School sports and was among the 49er faithful. He was thrilled with the 49ers Super Bowl runs, traveling with the team and joining them on the sidelines for some of their most exciting games. Ned was a gambler. In the past few decades, he's been an active member of a poker club based in Santa Rosa, and he loved playing Texas Hold 'em locally and in World Series of Poker events.



**McCaughey Brothers
general store in Bodega.**

But where will we go for milk...?

1979

Ned Mantua, who owns the store but not the building, reportedly feels the bulk of his sales comes from nuts, bolts and fishing lures.

He's also said he has about 30 regular customers, some in their 80s, who rely on the small grocery for daily provisions.

Mantua, whose family has lived in Bodega for three generations, says the store is "just about the same today as it was when my mother was going to the store as a little girl."

Mantua has run the store for 13 years. His present lease goes until 1982.

He has until March 20 to sell out his groceries or find an alternative that will please both his customers and Public Health.

"It's not really Public Health I have a complaint with. It's the law. You can go to a farmer's market and buy food they sell off the dirt, but my wooden floor won't do."

Ned had many friends. He was kind, a great storyteller, and a great listener. Ned was very generous and was compelled to supply his friends with fresh fish, abalone and crab. Ned valued community service. He served as a trustee on the Shoreline Unified School District School Board from 1975-1991. Ned served on the Board of Directors for Bodega Bay Public Utilities District since 2004.

Ned loved to be around his children and grandchildren and was especially happy when everyone was together. Ned had a great rainy-day hike along Lagunitas Creek on the day after Christmas last year.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The whole family was there, and they saw spawning salmon. He got to spend a little time with each person and tell them a little story or joke. A very good day, indeed, for Ned and his family. <https://www.legacy.com/>

SEIFERT'S HEART REMAINS IN HIS BELOVED SAN FRANCISCO\ CAROLINA PANTHERS COACH GEORGE SEIFERT RETURNS TO HIS HOMETOWN THIS WEEKEND ON A ``BUSINESS TRIP'

Ned Mantua is a lifer. He's called this cozy coastal town home since he was born 57 years ago. He's called himself a San Francisco 49ers fan since the franchise began in 1946. He's called himself a season-ticket holder since 1961. So you may find it odd that Mantua sees nothing wrong with what he's about to do. Today, Mantua will make the 90-minute trek south from Bodega Bay, over the Golden Gate Bridge and down to Candlestick Point. Then he'll walk into 3Com Park wearing a Carolina Panthers shirt and sit in the seat provided by the Carolina Panthers' head coach. This is not treason - it's loyalty. Mantua has called George Seifert his friend and fishing companion since 1999, and that trumps a lifetime of faithfulness to the 49ers home team.

"I'll be pulling for George," he said of the Panthers-49ers showdown. "I was such a die hard 49ers fan. But when George left, it was like part of football left." If Seifert's heart isn't exactly in San Francisco, it's about an hour northwest in Bodega Bay, where Seifert has made his retreat. His modest two-bedroom, wood-shingle house sits on a hillside above McCaughey Bros. Marine Supplies and Hardware, owned by his buddy Mantua. Directly across Bay Flat Road is the Spud Point Marina, where Seifert's boat is moored in slip E-9 when not in dry dock.

"This was the spot he was looking for" said Mantua, whose 148-year-old store is the only thing Seifert passes on his walk to the boat. Whenever he's in Bodega Bay you can't keep him off the water. Out by 6 a.m. in by 2 p.m., regardless of the weather. "Part of it is just being out there," Mantua says. Getting out there with him is half the adventure. "When he drives a boat, you've got to hang on," said Mantua. "As fast as that boat will go, he'll go. It's hammer down." - <https://greensboro.com>

Bodega store burglarized ¹⁹⁷⁶

BODEGA — McCaughey's Store in Bodega was burglarized early Saturday morning, and the burglar got away with \$1,980.

The burglar broke in through the back and spent several hours chiseling through a 75-year-old safe. Only the cash was taken.

Ned Mantua, store manager, said it was unusual for the store to have more than a few dollars on hand.

Congress restricts boat hull paint use

However, Ned Mantua, owner of McCaughey Bros., a boat supply business at Bodega Bay, said the state Legislature banned the use of paint containing TBT in February.

"We were allowed to sell stock we had and that was it," Mantua said. Now the store sells straight copper-base paint that does not contain TBT.

Mantua and commercial fisherman Paul Mapes said about 95 percent of the boats in the commercial fleet at the bay have wood, steel or fiberglass hulls. Most of the boats are less than 82 feet long.

STEWARDS OF THE SEA IN BODEGA BAY

Honoring The Fishermen of Bodega Bay (Part 2)

by Andrea Granahan - 2022

In our last issue, our story of Bodega Bay's fisherman highlighted the forming of our Grange, Chapter #777, one of few, if not the only one remaining in the United States, that focuses on fishing as agriculture. Our "farmers of the sea", their families and friends of the Grange are remembered as the group that saved Bodega Harbor from becoming too shallow for boats. They planted and grew grasses that hold the sand in place on the peninsula know as Bodega Head. The Grange supports the community and it's people. The Carpenters', the Ames', the Wedel's and many others created a strong foundation for our community by building a place to gather, a safe haven. The Grange members, mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, children, and their friends, grew into a force that influenced Federal and State politics with Crab Feeds and Social gatherings for all. For years teens got their first cars loans from the Grange Credit Union, and Grange Chapter #777 handed out (and still does) generous scholarships at graduation.

In the 1970s trouble for the fishing fleet was brewing again. Foreign fishing fleets invaded local waters. Overfishing was becoming an issue. Local fishermen fought for the 200 mile limit as a Fisheries Conservation Zone. They also faced a disappearing crab fishery. Not only were foreign countries invading the catch, California state planned to build the Peripheral Canal that would devastate salmon runs. The salmon runs were also being killed by uncontrolled logging, road building and other inland activities that destroyed their breeding grounds. Logging companies were proposing "ocean ranching" of salmon. Unfortunately, the first time it was tried the immature fish swam upstream, not to the ocean, and ate the naturally hatched fish and then died. The US Navy proposed dumping defunct nuclear submarines in the fishing grounds off the north coast. Fishermen were very angry about a lot.

They found their voice. Bill Grader, who ran a fish receiving dock in Fort Bragg, realized just trying to appeal to his local representative wasn't enough. In the late 70s he approached then State Senator Barry Keene

about holding a **Fisheries Forum**, bringing together a number of coastal legislators to meet directly with fishermen. The first few forums were almost fist fights. But the fishermen had real stories to tell and enough legislators were impressed they formed the Salmon and Steelhead Citizens Advisory Committee.

"The Forum came out of frustration," said the late Zeke Grader, Bill's son who became a potent industry spokesman, and helped form the **Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations**. The PCFFA eventually became a real force in Sacramento. Its weekly newsletter Friday became a must read for fishermen, environmentalists, fish buyers, lawmakers



and seafood lovers.

The Fisheries Forum: A key turning point, in the transition from being Farmers to Stewards of the Sea came in 1978, when the **Fisheries' Forum** captured the attention of stunned legislators when the salmon fishermen demanded to tax themselves. No one had ever asked to be taxed before! Barry Keene took up the cause of the Salmon Stamp and passed the bill. It required salmon fishermen pay up to \$30 for a salmon stamp each season. The money was to be used for fish

STEWARDS OF THE SEA IN BODEGA BAY

restoration, fixing the habitat. It would be controlled by a Salmon Stamp Committee headed by a fisherman and made up of fishermen advised by Fish and Game and by scientists of the fishermen's choosing. It was eventually increased to \$55 and extended to include commercial party boats that fished for salmon.

In 1981 the women of the fishing communities moved in on the action at the urging of Bill Grader. The late Donna Freeman of Bodega Bay and Dodie Scott of Fort Bragg were very active in creating the first seafood receptions for legislators and their staff at the Forum.

"When the women's organizations began to hold the seafood receptions in 1981, the Forum began to reach a whole second tier of legislators – those that simply like seafood. We've been able to use those contacts when the industry was in trouble. The reception has created a great fund of good will," recalled Keene on the fifteenth anniversary of the Forum back in 1987. Legislators began attending the Forum by the dozen.

Preparing the seafood (often for as many as 400 people) was not easy when the only space available to the women was often just the motel rooms.

"We had ice chests everywhere and a plastic tablecloth spread over a bed so we could use it for a table. One person worked in the shower cutting up smoked cod. Fuses kept blowing because too many electric cookers were being used," recalled the late Marcet Makela of Fort Bragg. Sometimes a restaurant would give up its kitchen to them making life easier.

One thing the women did was to send invitations to the staff people of the legislators. That was unusual and the staff were impressed by the thoughtfulness. It was also very diplomatic since much of the legislative grunt work that got bills through was done by key staff members who became industry champions.

California began passing legislation protecting the inland habitat of the salmon. The state Fish and Game Department had finally learned just cutting fishing seasons was not the way to protect a resource, but it was a way to get fishermen killed by forcing them to fish during a short period despite dangerous weather

or ocean conditions. California's actions caught the attention of the federal government and Congress passed the Magnuson Act in 1976 which created the 200 mile limit the fishermen had been fighting for. It was a major milestone.

The Forums also led to the creation of the State Senate Select Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, headed by Barry Keene and led by eight legislators. The committee could take on a lot of the work that the Forum demanded. For example, it directed research on the dumping of nuclear waste, blowing the whistle on the Navy and scuttling their plans for scuttling waste that would have poisoned the fish.

All this did not go unnoticed by the environmental community. They began attending the Forum and wanting to be on the agenda. Joining the fishermen, the united groups successfully fought offshore oil drilling in northern waters. That unique alliance also defeated government plans to strip mine the ocean floor for minerals. It was and is a sometimes an uneasy alliance since fishermen had often felt under attack by such groups as Green Peace, the Sierra Club, etc. But the fishermen had accomplished so much they had established themselves as effective stewards of the sea and the critters that inhabit it. And they welcomed the help from environmental groups in keeping the oceans and rivers that supported their industry clean and productive.

In our next issue, we will speak to the heroic efforts of today's fishermen and women on Bodega Bay.



FISHERMAN'S FESTIVAL



Since 1973 the Bodega Bay community has hosted our annual Fisherman's Festival, a festival packed with events for people of all ages – craft booths, live music, good food, entertainment and more. A favorite attraction is the wine tasting booth featuring more than 25 Sonoma County wines and a beer booth with several local ales. Plus we have something for every palate from barbecued oysters, local fish & chips, clam chowder and a variety of food trucks. Live music and entertainers perform on the main stage all day Saturday and Sunday. Artisans and vendors from all over California and beyond offer a wide selection of arts and crafts.

The festival has its origin as a celebration of the start of the Salmon fishing season and the annual Blessing of the Fleet. Each year's theme is chosen by the Bodega Bay Fisherman's Marketing Association. At the Festival site itself, you'll see a wooden boat challenge where participating teams build a vessel and compete in a boat race.



The Fisherman's Festival is a great venue for kids with a play area for face painting, spin paintings, games, a touch tank tide pool, and llamas (and guest pets) on parade. Sunday morning will feature the Blessing of the Fishing Fleet when decorated boats parade out of the harbor to receive a blessing from local clergy.

The Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival is a 501(c)(3) California nonprofit charitable organization and is 100% volunteer-run by local community members. All proceeds from the Festival benefit Bodega Bay Area community services and the Fisherman's Festival distributes funds to local nonprofit organizations.

Sunday's Blessing of the Fishing Fleet is the highlight of the Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival. These solemn annual blessings had their start more than 50 years ago when the event was part of the "Discovery Days Celebration" and we had a thriving commercial fishing industry. Today it is part and parcel of the annual Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival weekend. Discovery Days commemorated the discovery of Bodega Bay by Lt. Bodega y Quadra while surveying these waters for the Spanish in 1775.

At the first "Discovery Days Celebration" event in 1958, some 17 festively decorated boats were blessed in the parade – appropriately led by Eddie, William and Steve Smith, members from the large local Miwok Indian family which began the commercial fishing industry in Bodega Bay in the 1920s.

Today, even with a declining industry, the traditional annual blessing of the fishing fleet is an important observance for the entire community and acknowledges the key role of those who farm the seas, often at great risk to themselves. Local clergy officiate at the Blessing and a flower wreath is cast upon the waters honoring the fishermen lost at sea.

Our sincere thanks to our Advertisers, Supporters, Donors & New Members



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WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS


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Brian Leubitz
Sue Wedel

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Alan Harris
in Memory of Wendy

ARTIFACTS & STORIES

If you have artifacts or stories of Bodega Bay History to contribute to the Rancho Bodega Historical Society, please reach out to Robin Rudderow, our Archivist at RBHS@bodegamoons.net



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Enjoy the history of Rancho Bodega. Please join us. Subscribe for a year and receive the RBHS newsletters, \$15 individual (\$20 family). Support the stories of Bodega Bay.
http://www.ranchobodega.org/membership_form.pdf

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IN THIS ISSUE

The Fishermen of Bodega Bay

In the 1970s trouble for the Bodega Bay fishing fleet was brewing again. Foreign fishing fleets were invading local waters. Overfishing was becoming an issue. Local fishermen fought for a 200 mile limit as a Fisheries Conservation Zone. They also faced a disappearing crab fishery.

A Tribute to Ned Mantua



Ned Mantua passed away on February 15, 2022, at the age of 80. Ned lived his entire life in Bodega and Bodega Bay. He lived off the Valley Ford-Freestone Road until he was five, then moved to Bodega Bay.

SPRING EVENTS

FREE LECTURE SERIES TOMALES REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER <www.tomaleshistory.com/>
Valley Ford Family Creamery and the Story of Cheese: Sunday, April 24th, 2 PM, Tomales Regional History Center, 26701 Highway One, Tomales. The history of California cheese began in 1769 and we have a rich story right here! Karen Bianchi-Moreda and sons are the 4th & 5th generations to be involved in the local dairy industry and now on the vanguard of artisan cheeses, such as 'Estero Gold'. Hear their story and try some award winning cheeses.
Historic School Houses: Sunday, May 22nd, 2 PM, Tomales Regional History Center, 26701 Highway One, Tomales. Come learn from Sonoma County Parks Educator Ellie Muelrath, the stories behind many of the historic school houses that dot our landscape. Many of these schools can be seen today and are beautiful relics of our past.
50 Years Since Christo's Fence Plan: Panel Discussion with Those Who Were There: Sunday, June 26th, 2 PM, Tomales Town Hall, 27150 Maine St, Tomales. In 1972, Christo and Jeanne-Claude came to Sonoma County with the idea for the *Running Fence*. They had to convince local ranchers and towns of their vision. Many people thought it was nuts. Come here several locals who will share their direct experience, along with a screening of the Smithsonian Documentary "Christo and Jeanne-Claude: *Remembering the Running Fence*."

FREE VIRTUAL EVENTS AROUND SONOMA COUNTY

The Press Democrat has a listing of virtual events, such as Peanuts Origami, Poetry Book Club, Spark Your Inspiration, Meet the Artists! or take Creative Writing Classes <www.pressdemocrat.com/Events/>
The Museum of Sonoma County Looking Back at the Influenza Pandemic of 1918. (Online exhibit) The historic influenza pandemic of 1918 and 1919 has recently received more attention for obvious reasons. The experiences of that trying time echo across the decades, resonating with the events of today and the threat of the coronavirus. <<https://museumsc.org/1918-flu-pandemic/>>

For more local events, visit our website. <<http://www.ranchobodega.org/events.html>>