

RANCHO BODEGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DID YOU KNOW?

Exploding Boats

In 1953 the post-war fishing fleet had grown, the boats were powered by gasoline, not diesel. Fumes gathered in the vessels' holds, and were set off by a spark when they started their engines. "The explosions would wake us in the early hours. They rocked the town. You'd feel them even more than hear them," said Shirley Ames. "Men would be badly burned, and boats badly damaged."



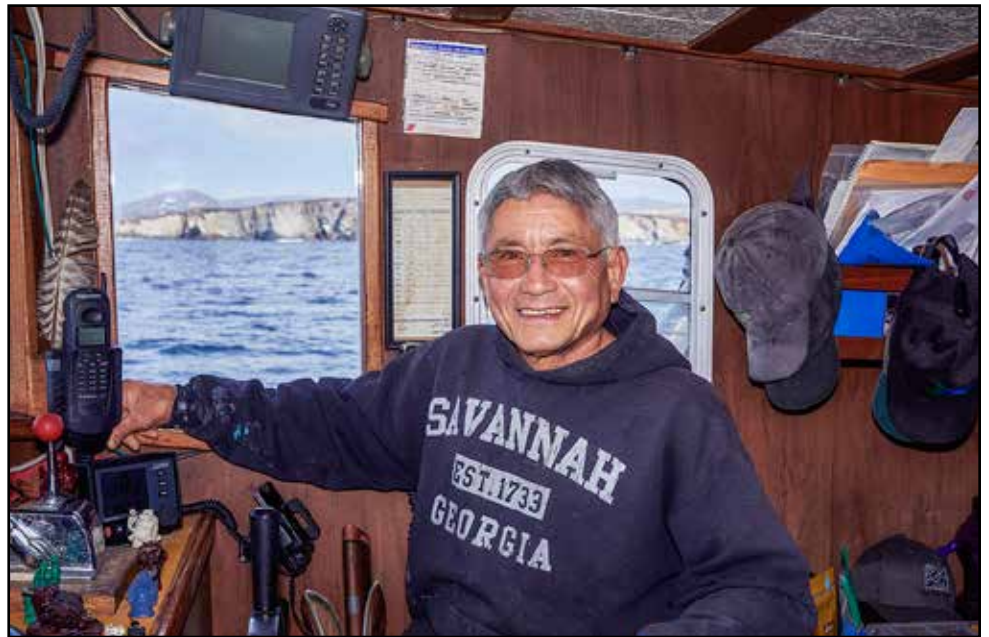
The town knew it had to do something so it turned to Ames' father, the late Dusty Rhodes. Before moving to Bodega Bay to open a service station, he started a fire department in West Sacramento and served as chief. He did the same for Bodega Bay. The town began its first responder efforts by purchasing a used fire engine. The first firehouse was built by volunteer labor on land donated by the Aikens family. The town held dances and other fundraisers to buy the materials.

Honoring The Fishermen of Bodega Bay (Part 3)

by Andrea Granahan - 2022

There are some battles that can never be won because they cannot and should not ever be lost. They must be fought continually, over and over again.

Both environmentalists and commercial fishermen can give example after example of that type of battle. The battles to prevent dumping sewage into the ocean, the battles to save salmon runs in clean, unobstructed rivers, the battle to prevent the ocean floor from being stripmined, the battles to keep the oil industry out of fishery conservation zones at sea, and such, never end. Forces of greed or expediency are always ready to pounce.



A Steward of the Sea, is fisherman Dick Ogg, VP of the Bodega Bay Fishing Association.

Our fishing industry at first resisted joining forces with environmental organizations. The environmental groups began showing up at the Fisheries Forum in Sacramento, then began to attend other fishery related groups. (continued next page)

STEWARDS OF THE SEA IN BODEGA BAY

Honoring The Fishermen of Bodega Bay (Part 3)

Groups like the Sierra Club, National Resources Defense Council and others realized a vital, active industry already existed that needed such simple things as clean water, undisturbed streams and rivers, a pure ocean. Things environmentalists were already fighting for and where the fishing industry could add mighty force.

Both environmentalists and the fishing industry became uneasy but effective allies in many unending battles, but sometimes, like all good partnerships, they clash. To remain allies, they needed to work things out.

In Bodega Bay an important “steward of the sea” is fisherman Dick Ogg. Just as environmentalists attended fishery gatherings in the past, he represents the fishing industry at environmentalists gatherings. He is one of the Directors and the Vice President of the Bodega Bay Fishing Association (BBFA) led by President Loren Edwards. Ogg is a board member on the Cordell Bank Foundation, the Gulf of Farallones Foundation, and is an ecological liaison to the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, the federal agency that sets fishing seasons, and more.

Whale Entanglements. Lately, a huge concern has been a conflict between the crab fishery and migrating California Gray Whales. The fishing season has been seriously delayed



and shortened as a result. Ogg actively seeks solutions. At his own expense, he is traveling to Tasmania where a company is willing to use a gear design of his and test it to see if it will help avoid entanglement of whales.

Dick persuaded fishermen to voluntarily postpone a crab season opening even though the federal authorities approved it.

“There are a lot more whales of all ages than there were because they are protected. Immature adolescent

whales are like young human teens hanging out at convenience stores. That has led to many more adolescent whales, just hanging out along the coast where they find food,” Ogg says. Unlike older adult whales predictable mating migration patterns, “It’s those adolescent whales that are getting into trouble.

Think of our freeways. We can widen the roads, put airbags in cars, and all sorts of safety accessories, but there are still going to be some accidents and deaths. We have found

STEWARDS OF THE SEA IN BODEGA BAY

acceptable levels of deaths on the highways. But now, fishermen are being asked to do the impossible – 100 percent NO interaction with whales. We fishermen have to show all the action we can, try the hardest we can, to demonstrate we are doing our part,” Ogg says. “But accidents will happen. We just have to do everything we can to prevent them as much as possible.”

A few years ago, he persuaded fishermen to voluntarily postpone opening crab season, even though federal authorities had approved opening. Ogg saw there were more whales in peril than authorities counted. That was a major diplomatic move on the part of the industry impressing the government agency folks and the environmentalists.

Ogg says another major environmental problem that has arisen in recent years is **ocean debris**. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch which is larger than Texas horrifies most



people. Multiple agencies, governments and NGOs have tried to come up with clean-up plans. But ocean debris is also a local problem. Lost fishing gear is part of that debris. Whales become entangled in it. The Fishermen came up with a program to help fund efforts to retrieve lost gear. A California State program issues permits to groups and associations that retrieve gear.

“The state program had glitches to be worked out. I left it to work directly with BBFA on gear retrieval,” Ogg said.

Wind Generation Sounds Great! Or is it? Another environmental issue that Ogg foresees is one the fishing industry will need to educate the environmental groups about is – **offshore wind turbines**. Ogg who worked in electrical engineering for 25 years, sees them as potentially disastrous to fisheries.

“NGOs think they could be great but don’t recognize the potentially severe negative impacts: buried cables, a shadow effect of the interruption of winds, disruption of currents, even disrupting ocean upwelling that could change fishery migratory patterns.”

Offshore turbines are notoriously difficult to maintain and have short life spans resulting in more ocean debris.

There are a lot of challenges and always will be to keeping those valuable natural resources fish and people need. Stewards of Sea, if not Warriors of the Sea will always need to be on alert and ready to fight the next battle on the horizon. ■

FROM THE ARCHIVES

A brief history of the Fishing Industry in Bodega Bay

It all began with the Smith family, descendants of Capt. Stephen Smith, the 1840's grantee of the Bodega Rancho and their Coast Miwok mother named Tsupu (also known as Maria Checka). Captain Smith's and Tsupu's son William (Bill) Smith was born in 1843. He married Rosalie Charles and they had 12 children. Mark Linares, their second great-grandchild wrote their story.

By the turn of the 20th century William Smith was fishing from small boats off the sand spit now known as Doran Beach. He sold his catch from a truck and his small fish market on the 300th block of Santa Rosa's Fourth Street. In 1919, Williams six sons, the "Smith Brothers" bought the first drag boats into the Bay and contracted to sell fish in San Francisco establishing themselves as the first true commercial fishermen in Bodega Bay.

It was in August 1844 when Captain Stephen Smith successfully petitioned the Mexican Governor of California, Manuel Micheltorena to grant him 35,487 acres of land. Captain Smith purchased the buildings from John Sutter, who had purchased Fort Ross from the Russians. Smith's Bodega Rancho stretched from the Russian River along the coast south to Estero Americano. Captain Smith owned a small vessel called the Fayaway, which he sailed between the Port of Bodega and San Francisco. In 1849 the passenger fare was \$14. Bodega Bay was Smith's shipping port which helped develop the area into a commercial fishing port.

In the early 1900's with the help of his Coast Miwok family William Smith founded the commercial fishing industry in Bodega Bay. William Smith purchased land along the bay from the Dorans for a place for his fishing business and home. The family home was located where the Bodega Coast Inn now stands, next to the post office. Their business lasted until the early 1970s. The Smith Brothers wharf and warehouse was the first in Bodega Bay. Smith Brothers Road is named in honor of the brothers. The Smith Brothers wharf was where the Bodega Harbour Yacht Club is currently located diagonally across from the Bodega Bay Post Office.

For years Bill Smith continued selling his catch in Sonoma County making a fair living for his family. As his children reached maturity they too became involved in the business. In 1911 five of the Smith brothers went to fish in Alaska. In just one season they earned enough to buy two 50-foot trawlers from the Boat Works in Sausalito, named Smith Brothers #1 and #2. The brothers began selling their catch at the fish market they operated on Fourth Street in Santa Rosa.

Salmon Discovered. It was sometime around the "Great War" World War I when Bill's sons discovered large runs of salmon at Bodega Bay. Up until then salmon fishing was farther north at Fort Bragg but during the war fishermen were too short-handed to go that far. Discovering salmon caused a tremendous surge of fishing in Bodega Bay.

Sometime before 1927 according to Young (Pinky) Smith, the Smith Brothers Fishery was incorporated with five of the working brothers. They were joined by boats skippered by Bobby Friscia and the Cacacci brothers. The port was more mud flat than water. There was no real town just a community known simply as Bay with a schoolhouse and a few houses. By the 1930s the Smith brothers had the largest fleet in the bay and were doing business with Paladini, the San Francisco fish firm. The Smith Brothers' fleet would take fifty or seventy boxes of salmon or bottom fish per day. After more than 70 years as a fisherman Bill Smith passed away on November 9, 1936. The business Bill started prospered and his sons continued running the Smith Brothers Fishery.

Bill Smith Jr. recalled the "old days" when the brothers were just boys and their father started the commercial fishing industry. He said that his family had been fishing in Bodega Bay "almost ever since there's been a bay here." Adding "There's a lot more to commercial fishing than just going out with an empty boat and coming back with one filled with fish or crabs. There's a lot of work bringing it to the table."

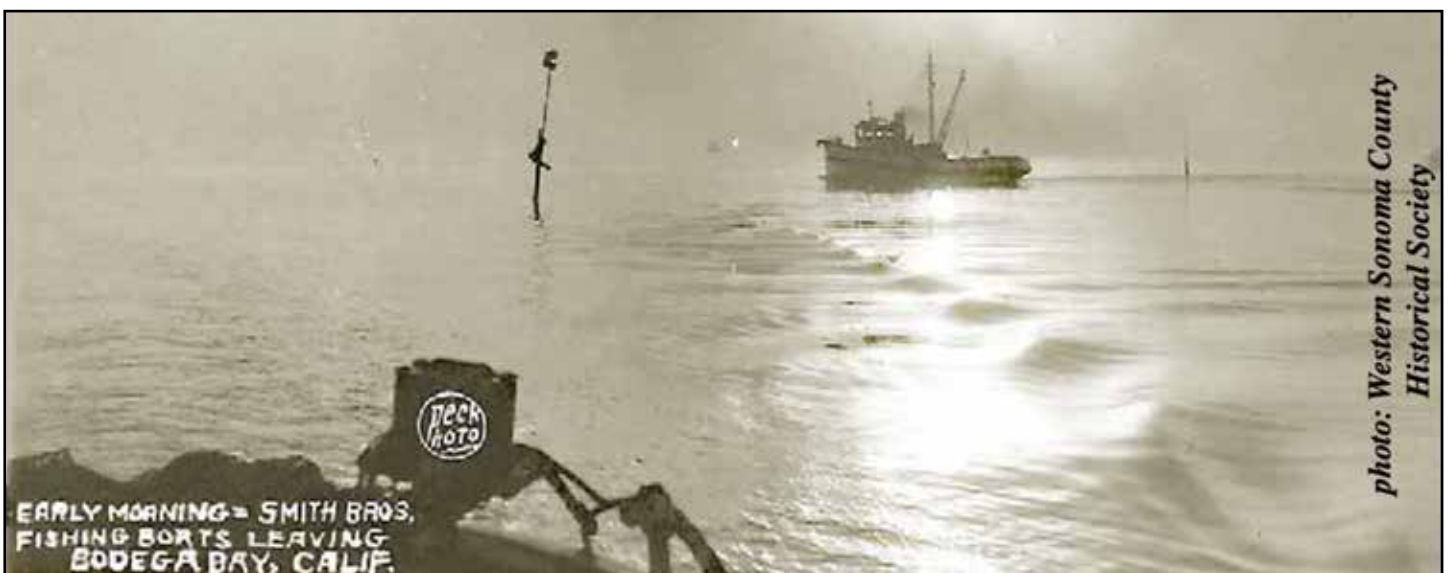
FROM THE ARCHIVES

The "golden age of the fishing industry begins." The 1940's were when Dungeness crab became part of the fishery. Although the Smith family had netted crabs in the bay and ocean for years, the crab industry was really born during World War II. The early 1940s brought forth quick freezing techniques. Changes in technology turned the crab industry into a new line of work for fishermen and women. By 1943, "the fishing industry at Bodega Bay had shore-side installations valued at \$230,000 and locally owned boats valued in excess of half a million dollars."

During the Second World War, commercial boats were exempt from fuel rationing. Glenice Ames Carpenter wrote an article for the Rancho Bodega Historical Society's newsletter. "During this time, the fishing boats were engaged in catching soup fin sharks because their liver was valuable for vitamins. Catching sharks for livers brought a boom to Bodega Bay's fishing industry." But when synthetic vitamins began to be commercially produced, "Many fishermen were left with a shed full of nets and nothing to fish." Glenice Carpenter's husband Earl Carpenter fished for a half a century from Bodega Bay. Earl said "The Smith brothers made enough money from shark fishing to build their wharf." The fleet numbered about a dozen when the Carpenters arrived in 1942 and increased with the dredging of the channel in the early 1940's, when the "golden age of the fishing industry began." The Smith Brothers Fishery continued with the five Smith brothers. When two of the brothers passed away the Fishery closed in 1963. The three remaining brothers fished until 1970 or so.

The Golden Age of Commercial fishing is well, over. Unfortunately salmon fishing took a tum for the worse in 1989 when human alteration and damage to streams and rivers where Coho salmon spawn took its toll on the fish population. This tum of events sent many a fisherman looking for other employment while those that remained looked for short-term relief and long-term solutions. In the spring of 1995, Salmon fishing prospects began to look good again, but the previous few years tempered the optimism with caution. It recognized that the health of the fishing industry is too fragile to take for granted. In the recent years salmon fishing has decreased drastically due to restrictions by the California Department of Fish and Game, because of warmer waters and a seven-year record breaking drought. Restrictions and Marine Conservation Reserves are in place to help prevent the extinction of the Wild King (Coho) Salmon.

Fishermen sought other species of fish and sea life such as crabs and sea urchins to make their living. Then in 2015 and 2016, Domoic Acid, a neurotoxin, severely curtailed the crab fisheries. Nonetheless the fishing industry remains an important part of today's Bodega Bay with crab, rockfish and sole fisheries of major importance. A sea urchin industry developed to serve the Japanese market where the spiny creature's roe is considered a delicacy, and because of our recreational fishing industry, the local fishermen's eateries continue to thrive. ■



FACES OF BODEGA BAY

Dick Ogg **Captain of the Karen Jeanne** *by Melinda Pahl*

Fisherman Dick Ogg's home is in Bodega Bay. It calms his soul and brings him peace. Born in Nagasaki Japan in 1953, Dick learned to fish during visits with his grandfather, a Ponca Indian, in Oklahoma. His family settled in Sonoma County, where as a teen, Dick grew up fishing and diving for abalone. He kept fishing, taught martial arts, and worked at Sonoma State University as an electrical engineer.

Dick and his wife Laurie came to live and work in Bodega Bay at the end of the 1990's. Drawn to the coastal waters, today he captain's the Karen Jeanne. He delivers his fresh catch to docks in Bodega Harbor.

Dick actively advocates for healthy wildlife, healthy ocean waters and the Fishing Community. His first-hand knowledge comes with 55 years on and in the

waters. He loves fishing and would never give it up for the world.

Dick's respectful leadership expands his role to keep the fishery alive. His gentle but firm influence extends to Sacramento and Washington DC, by serving on Federal and California State committees. He works closely on things like whale entanglements, restrictions affecting the catch, better health of the waters and its inhabitants, while earning a fair, sustainable catch sold at a reasonable profit.

His Stewardship energizes a traditional livelihood, to feed people with clean, fresh vitamin-rich protein. It makes sense, filling in the gaps between crab and salmon seasons with black cod and albacore. Lucky for Bodega Bay, a happy, calm man, Dick enjoys every day, good or bad, finding pleasure in each step along the way.

Thanks Dick for your firm hand and gentle smile! ■



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



Robin Rudderow
Attorney at Law

Estate Planning
Wills & Trusts

Bodega Bay, CA


(415) 298-6925
rrlaw@bodegamoon.net



D. REN BROWN
1781 N. Highway One
Bodega Bay CA 94923-0156
707-875-2922
rbc4art@renbrown.com
www.renbrown.com

The REN BROWN COLLECTION

**WELCOME TO OUR
NEW MEMBER**
Julie Anne Hill
**THANK YOU TO
OUR DONORS**



**BUSINESS
SERVICES
UNLIMITED**

ph. (707) 875-2183
fax (707) 875-2952

OPEN M-F 10-4
UPS: 2 PM • FEDEX: 2 PM
Packing & Shipping

Full Service Copies - Color / B&W
Bookkeeper • Secretarial Services

NOTARY PUBLIC
PO Box 115 • 1400 N Hwy 1
Bodega Bay, CA 94923
www.bodegabaycopy.com
email: shonawelr@mac.com



John Hershey Photography
Bodega Bay Photographer

hersheyj@mac.com
www.jhersheyphoto.com

PO Box 477
Bodega Bay CA 94923
415 • 279 • 9649



Julie Schneider of Bodega Bay recommended our organization to the National Philanthropic Trust and RBHS was granted \$500.



Ginochio's
KITCHEN
BBQ • Italian • Pasta

If you love us...
f i yelp

707.377.4359

1410 BAY FLAT RD • BODEGA BAY CA 94923
www.GinochiosKitchen.com
GinochiosKitchen@gmail.com

Coastal Treasures
Bodega Bay
Seaside Gifts and More...
(707) 321-5696
1580 Eastshore Rd.
Blue Whale Shopping Center

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@bodegamoon.net



Bodega Coast Inn & Suites
www.bodegacoastinn.com

521 Coast Highway 1, Box 55
Bodega Bay, Ca 94923
Phone: 707-875-2217
800-346-6999

Kevin & Tammy Kingsley
Innkeepers
innkeeper@bodegacoastinn.com



The Tides Wharf
835 Hwy One, Bodega Bay, CA 707-875-3652

BECOME A MEMBER

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

BOARD MEMBERS

<u>Archivist</u>	<u>Treasurer</u>	<u>Newsletters</u>	<u>Webmaster</u>
Robin Rudderow rbhs@bodegamoon.net	Linda Mark LJMark2@comcast.net	Melinda Pahl Melinda.Pahl@comcast.net	John Maestri JohnMaestri@comcast.net
<u>Member at Large</u>	<u>Member at Large</u>	<u>Member at Large</u>	<u>Member at Large</u>
Ren Brown rbc4art@renbrown.com	Andrea Granahan granahan10@gmail.com	Tom Petek trpetek@gmail.com	Jeanette Petek jwpetek@gmail.com

**Rancho Bodega Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation
PO Box 1027, Bodega Bay CA 94923**

Rancho Bodega Historical Society
PO Box 1027
Bodega Bay CA 94923
www.RanchoBodega.org

IN THIS ISSUE

The Fishermen of Bodega Bay

It's adolescent whales that are getting into trouble. Think of our freeways. We can widen the roads, put airbags in cars, and add all sorts of safety accessories, but there are still going to be some accidents. The fishermen are being asked the impossible; 100 percent NO interaction with whales.



Dick Ogg

Dick came to live and work in Bodega Bay in the 1990's. Today he captain's the Karen Jeanne. He delivers his fresh catch to docks in Bodega Harbor.

SUMMER EVENTS

SONOMA COUNTY FINDING HISTORY DAY, August 6th, 10 AM to 2 PM, Finley Center, West College Avenue at Stony Point Road, west Santa Rosa. Organized by the Sonoma County Historical Society with the Sonoma County History & Genealogy Library celebrating 60 Years of SCHS Service. Sponsored by the Rancho Bodega Historical Society <www.sonomacountyhistory.org> FREE

FREE LECTURE SERIES TOMALES REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER <www.tomaleshistory.com/>
New England Started Here: The 1579 Landing of Francis Drake, Sunday, August 28, 2022, 2-3 PM, Tomales Regional History Center: Conference Room, 26701 Highway 1, Tomales. The earliest European contact with Native Peoples in northern California occurred at Drakes Bay in Marin County. This 1579 visit was years before Roanoke, Jamestown or Plymouth. This talk will explore the background for Drake's voyage, its progress and the events here. A surprisingly diverse group of people met here, in peaceful interactions, but they certainly did not understand each other. Then, the Coast Miwok were left undisturbed for nearly 200 years.

HIKE: Drake's Landing in Pt Reyes, Saturday, September 3, 2022, 9 AM-Noon, Kenneth Patrick Visitor Center, Point Reyes National Seashore, 1 Drake Beach Road, Inverness. This three-mile, round-trip walk down a firm beach will take you to the 1579 site of Drake's landing. It's a rarely-visited site in near-16th century condition. Members of the Drake Navigators Guild, the group which has been studying the landing since 1949, will lead the hike and provide commentary and descriptions. Bring good shoes, water, snacks, lunch, sunscreen, camera, field glasses. Layer clothing: it can be biting cold or hot and sunny.

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/>

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