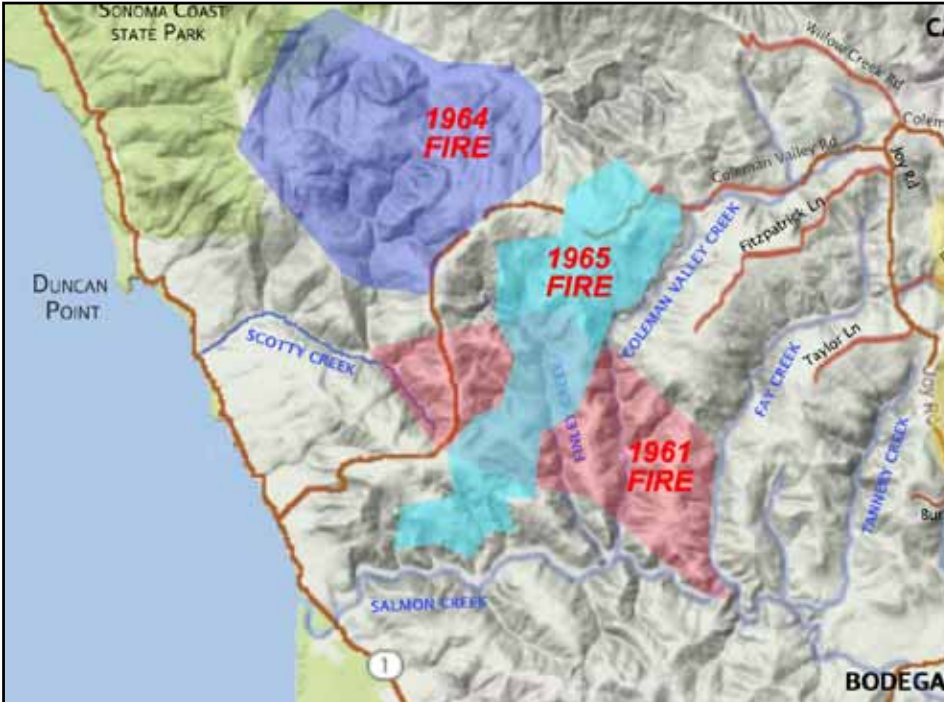


RANCHO BODEGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAJOR FIRES in RANCHO BODEGA



WILLOW CREEK FIRE

Sept. 1964 This fire began south of Willow Creek Road, ran along the valley north of Coleman Valley Road, along Wright Hill Road, and reached the east end of Furlong Gulch, burning 2603 acres. That September there were 94 wildfires in the North Bay within 2 weeks, including the Hanley Fire in Santa Rosa. Humidity down to 15%, Temperature up to 100's. Winds peaking at 50 mph.

COLEMAN VALLEY FIRE

Sept. 1965 Began south west of Occidental, continued along the western slopes of Fay Creek and along the ridge between Coleman Valley and Fay Creeks, moving southwest almost to Salmon Creek to burn about 2000 acres. One of twelve simultaneous fires in the county, one of 94 fires in the North Bay within 2 weeks. Humidity 15%, temperature in high 90's, winds to 78-100 mph from north east.

NATIVE AMERICAN ERA

8000 BCE to 1836

Native Americans purposely burned most of Northern California every one to five years until Governor Vallejo prohibited the practice in 1836. Throughout California 5-13 million acres were burned each year. In 1818 Captain Golovine of the Russian Navy observed an Indian fire racing across grassland towards the Russian River. Lightning-initiated fires are estimated to have occurred once every 50 years.

ROBERTSON FIRE

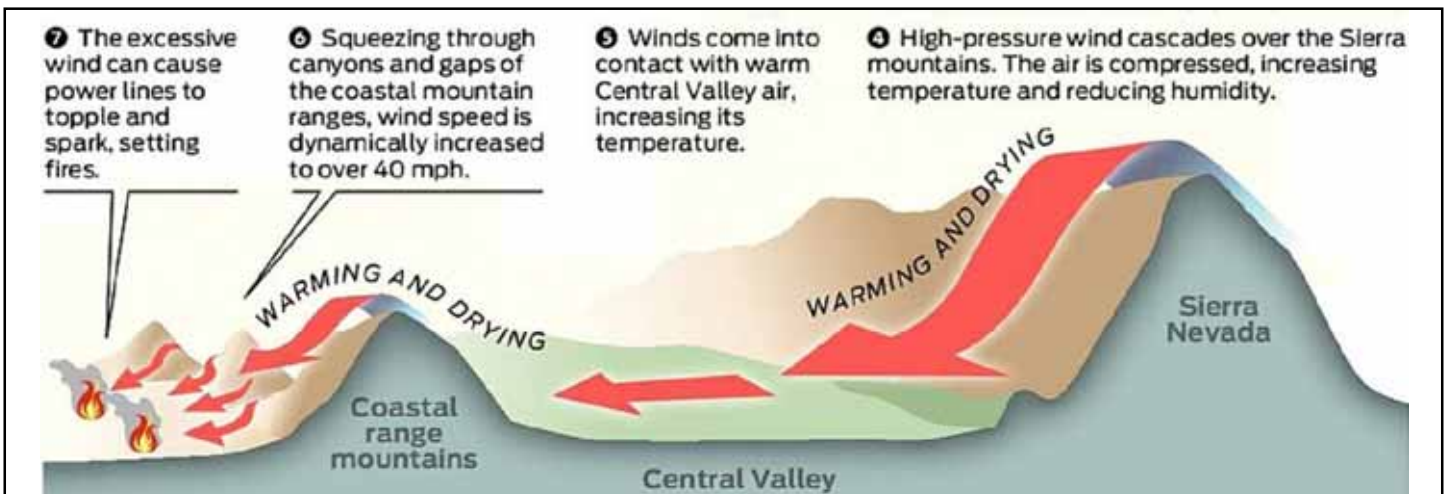
Sept. 1961 Began six miles north of Bodega Bay and burned southwest jumping Coleman Valley Rd. Started on Marshall Hendren Ranch off Hwy 1, reached along the western slopes of Fay Creek, and along Tannery, and Coleman Creeks down almost to Salmon Creek. Burned 2208 acres. One of twelve fires burning that day in the north bay. Humidity near 0%, temperature high 90's, winds 80 mph from north east.

MAP CREDITS

Collated by Noel Bouck and Diane Masura with map by Bob Fink for the Salmon Creek Watershed Council (October 2021 CE)

DATA

Cal-Fire Fire Perimeters by Emily Zentner and Chris Hagan



BODEGA BAY

Shirley Ames 1931-2022

Shirley Ames passed away peacefully at her home. She was born in Fort Bragg, CA and moved to Bodega Bay at the age of 13 with her parents Edward (Dusty) and Ella Rhodes. Shirley attended Tomales High School and married her high school sweetheart, Harold Ames. Shirley worked in the crab and fish processing plants, and the US Postal Service for 31 years, serving as Postmaster for 22. On Christmas Eve she made sure all packages were delivered before she went home. She was a charter member of the Bodega Bay Grange and instrumental in the creation of the Bodega Bay Volunteer Fire Department and Volunteer Ambulance Service, a member of the Bodega Bay Fisherman's Wives, and the Rancho Bodega and Tomales Historical Societies. Shirley cooked and served many Bodega Bay Grange Crab Cioppinos and volunteered many hours at the Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festivals. She also enjoyed her role in the Alfred Hitchcock movie "The Birds".



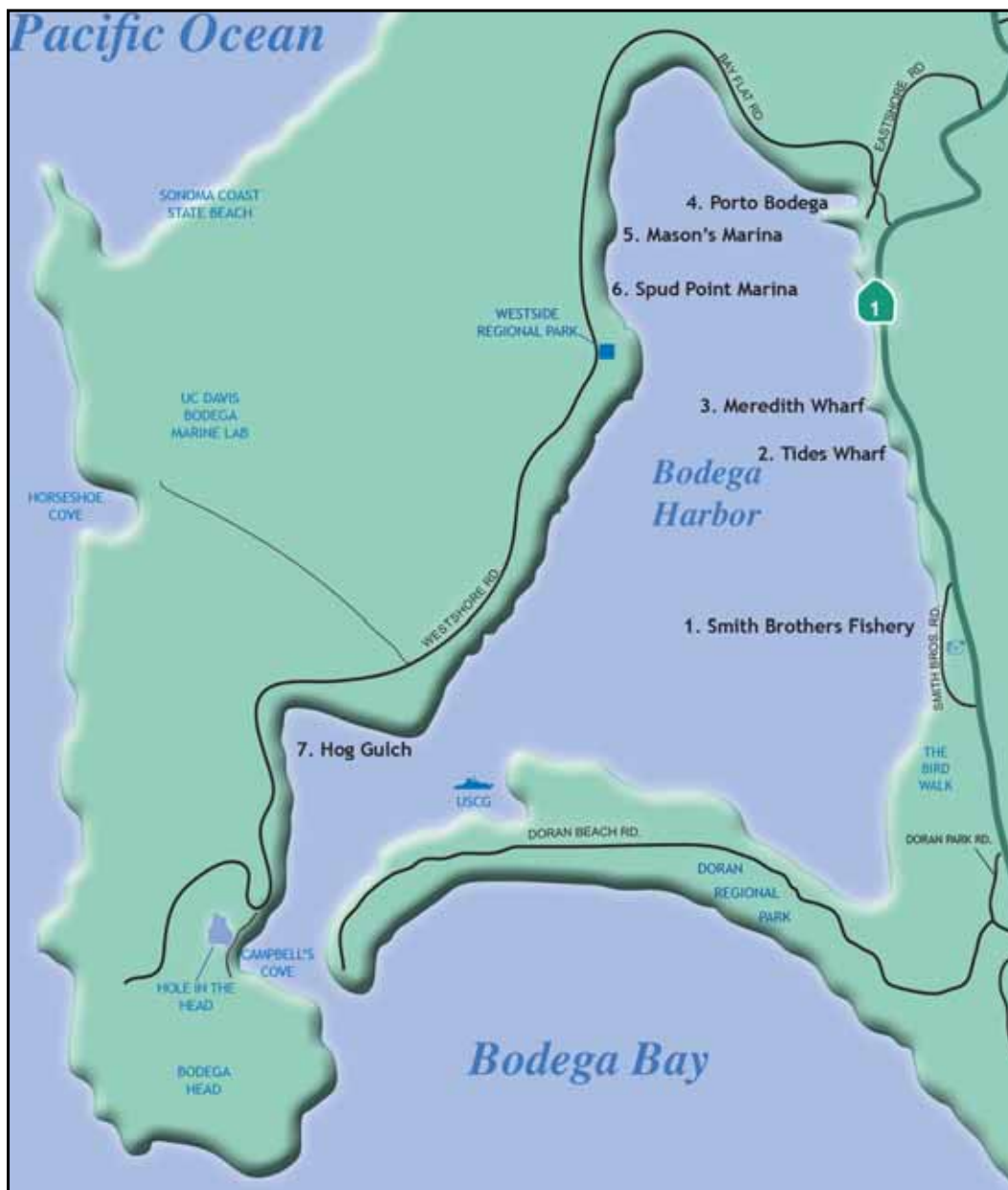
Fishing Industry Guide to Bodega Bay Map →

- 1. Smith Brothers Fishery** was founded in 1901 by William Smith, the son of Rancho Bodega grantee and Yankee Captain Stephen Smith and a Coast Miwok woman named Tsupu. William started fishing with a sail boat and used a horse-drawn wagon to haul his catch to town. His six sons expanded the business and by the 1930s the Smith Brothers had the largest fleet in the bay.
- 2. Tides Wharf** was started in 1926 by Louie Asman as a snack bar and grew into a small restaurant called 'Louie's' featured in "The Birds". Louie operated the first party boat out on the bay. Eventually the property became the "Tides", with the large restaurant, hotel/inn, wharf, fish market and an extensive fish wholesaling operation.
- 3. Meredith Wharf**, a fish cannery and pier, was constructed in 1943 during World War II to feed the troops and the burgeoning Sacramento metropolis. After years of neglect, it was beyond rehabilitation and was recently torn down by Sonoma County.
- 4. Porto Bodega** started as 'Mosher's Camp' in the 1930s. The 57-slip marina was created by dredging the marsh area around the bay. It is home to sport and commercial boats as well as charter boats for fishing and whale watching.
- 5. Mason's Marina** is on the west shore of the bay. That part of the bay became accessible in the 1960s after the PG&E built the road to Bodega Head. The Marina has slip or tie up capacity for 130 boats ranging in size from 19 feet to 40 feet.
- 6. Spud Point Marina** was completed in 1985, but the planning began years earlier, including a 1976 Feasibility Study and the 1978 California legislation authorizing 200 commercial berths and 50 sport fishing berths. The lengthy approval was spearheaded by local fishing families and politicians. The Marina has a concrete breakwater, mobile lift, boat repair yard, crab pot storage and more.
- 7. Hog Gulch**, a cove close to the entrance to the bay, was used by fishermen as a safe place to wait out bad weather from the 1920s to 1943. During salmon season there would sometimes be 700 boats tied-up together.

BODEGA BAY

Fishing Industry in Bodega Bay

RBHS was a proud sponsor of Finding History Day, an event to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Sonoma County Historical Society.



The event, on Saturday August 6, 2022, was held at the Finley Community Center in Santa Rosa. We had a lot of fun meeting other history groups, looking at their displays, and listening to speakers. We enjoyed sharing a display focusing on the history of the fishing industry in Bodega Bay and chatting with the many folks who had their own Bodega Bay fishing stories to tell. The map and list of marinas in this newsletter were part of our handout for the event, and the accompanying historic photos in our display can be viewed at www.ranchobodega.org/Archives (click on the link “Fishing Industry in Bodega Bay”). Our table was staffed by RBHS board members Linda Mark, Jeanette Petek, Tom Petek, Melinda Pahl, Andrea Granahan, and Robin Rudderow.

Approximately 40 groups participated in the event included the following: Cotati Historical Society, Drake Navigators Guild, Filipino American National Historical Society, Sonoma County Chapter, Fort Ross Conservancy, Glen Ellen Historical Society, Guild of St. George, Historical Society of Santa Rosa, Japanese American Citizens League, LGBTQI+ Legacy Sonoma County, North Bay Italian Cultural Foundation, Northwestern Bottle Collectors Assoc., Petaluma Historical Library & Museum, Redwood Empire Chinese Association, Russian River Historical Society, Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery, Sonoma Valley Historical Society, The Sea Ranch Archives Committee, Western Sonoma County Historical Society, Windsor Historical Society.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Ocean View House in Salmon Creek

by Adrianus Boudewyn, 2007

One of the best spreads in Salmon Creek is the old "Ocean View House", built in 1868 by Hugh Marshall, as a hotel, post office and saloon. It was a designated stop for the coast stagecoach of the time. Originally, the property - known as the Ocean View Hotel Property encompassed 25 acres-stretched as far as the beach, but after subsequent owners subdivided some of the land, it now sits on close to an acre with sweeping views. The 25-acre tract was deeded from Manuela Curtis (widow of Capt. Stephen Smith) to Hugh Marshall in March of 1862. Marshall planted the cypress trees at the house and it is said that Monarch butterflies used to winter in these trees.

Three of the neighboring dwellings still standing today, originally served the purposes of the hotel. One bedded the stagecoach horses (for two horses, the same number used by a stage coach for part of the route), another was a chicken house to provide fresh eggs and poultry for hotel guests, and the third housed the cows that gave the milk (under the house floor there are still cement feed troughs and run-off troughs).

The coast stage coach route that included this stop ran between Ocean View and Petaluma, covered Bodega (Bay) Port, Bodega Corners, Freestone, Anly Ranch, Miller and Walker's near the present Sebastopol, Stony point (Washoe House) and Petaluma. Fare for a ride from Ocean View to Petaluma was \$3.50 in gold.

Hugh Marshall, was one of seven brothers who came to California from County Armagh in Northern Ireland. They originally settled in Philadelphia, then made their way to California around 1852. Hugh came around Cape Horn to get to California, which took him a year. He located land near Tomales and it is he who urged his brothers to bring cattle to replace the Spanish dairy cattle. James, Sam, and David did just that, forming a partnership and herding two immense droves of cattle over the plains to California in a seven-month trek. Once they settled in the Tomales area they became prominent in many endeavors and the town of Marshall is named after them.

Meanwhile, Hugh had moved up to the Bodega Bay area, building and making his plans for the Ocean View House property in Salmon Creek.



When counted in the 1870 census, he was 45 and single. He again appears in the 1880 census as being a stock raiser in Salt Point, and still single. In addition to owning the hotel and saloon, he was also appointed as postmaster in 1870 and held that post until 1872. According to family correspondence, Hugh at one time served on the Sonoma County Grand Jury as foreman. In later years, around 1880, he lived in Gualala and still later in Cloverdale, perhaps with his brother Alex, who had moved there with his second wife. Beyond that, very little is known about Hugh Marshall.

The Ocean View Property as it was called passed through a series of owners beginning in the 1870s. It was also subject to claims in lawsuits and at one time appears to have been into receivership.

Both chimneys went down in the 1906 earthquake and only the one on the right was ever rebuilt. A distillery was built (in the area where the greenhouse now sits) and George McChristian was hired as the bootlegger. Later, to hide liquor, a special



FROM THE ARCHIVES



room was built around the brick fireplace chimney at the north end of the second level of the house with peepholes drilled into doors for watching inquisitive "revenueurs." (After prohibition, stills were set up in this room and the chimney was used to provide venting for the fumes).

In 1920, Bertha E. Hays was listed as the owner and she sold it to George McChristian, then single, in 1922. McChristian liked to fish on a rowboat on Salmon Creek and was known to post "rattlesnake danger" signs along upper Salmon Creek so that he could protect his favorite areas for huckleberry and blackberry picking. McChristian had a theory about the dune grass, calling it "dead horse grass." The theory went that a horse had eaten the grass in Australia, died, floated onto Salmon Creek beach, ruptured and scattered the seeds. After he sold the house to Vernon L. Bressie, McChristian married in Salmon Creek and moved into a small house on Bean Avenue and lived there until he died.

After buying the house in 1934, Bressie found false bottoms in cupboards, used to hide liquor in earlier days. He also found bottles and jugs of wine and whiskey buried in sand on the hill where the garage now stands. In fact, while bulldozing for the garage foundations, strong whiskey fumes emanated from the ground and it turns out workmen had accidentally broken some of the surviving bottles while excavating. Some of the workmen poured out some of the whiskey and declared it to be "good." The original still from upstairs was also found at this time, buried in the sand on the hill west of the house below the water tank. According to Bressie, when he bought the house the oceanfront was closer to the house than it was in 1985. He said that before grasses and trees were planted, there were no sand dunes along the ocean beach.

The wishing well was built by Bressie. He had found stepping stones above the old spring, suggesting that Coast Miwok Indians had used it. According to Bressie, water sometimes rose to the ground level and ran off down the hill. A pump house was built to pump the water to the hill tank, where it was stored for use with gravity flow. It had enough pressure to service some hill homes.

Bressie built the large greenhouse attached to the original house in 1972. He said there had been a bonded distillery on that spot, also a grotto and fish pond that had to be removed to make room for the new structure.

Bressie called it Friendship House, because it was used to entertain guests. The huge old stove, a ship's galley stove, was there when Bressie bought the house. McChristian is thought to have moved it there. It was manufactured in San Francisco and had gone around Cape Horn several times on steamers.

The closet that was under the stairway before Bressie's remodeling was empty except for boxes and junk. Bressie found a gold chain with a solid gold bear attached bearing the date 1891, and the initial J.A.L.

The house comes with its own stories. Black Bart was supposed to have slept there. A man was killed in the saloon. He was shot from the outside, and the Bressie children had looked for bullet holes. And during Marshall's time someone went crazy and supposedly took an axe to all the doors upstairs. They were replaced with beautiful hand hewn doors of native redwood. And, one woman said she saw a ghost. Even Rose Gaffney lived there before her death in 1979. Bressie owned the house and water system until 1980, when he sold it to Richard Murphy. It was sold again in 2005, when Arlene Hogan bought it. Throughout its 140+ year history the sweeping view has remained.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

BABE WOOD

From Hop Farmer to Cadillac Dealer

Built in 1892, “Woodhaven” is a lovely two-story, white clapboard home proudly perched on the east side of Highway One in Bodega Bay’s “Old Town” or “Village.” This is the story as told by “Babe” Wood,* whose family built Woodhaven as their summer home.

Sam Talmadge, Babe’s grandfather, was born in 1875. He and his family enjoyed the town of “Bay,” today known as Bodega Bay, and built several homes in the Village in the late 1800’s. Sam Talmadge built Woodhaven in 1892. Across the street his son, Babe’s Uncle Ronnie, built a gabled house on the bank of the bay with a long wharf, in the area known now as Porta Bodega. Aunt Ella, Babe’s grandmother’s oldest daughter, built a house next to the Creamery, on the west side of Highway One, accessed by the same driveway that still goes down to the old Creamery. Babe’s parents, Frank Wood and Hattie Mae, built a house on the shore below Diekmann’s. Babe’s uncle, Peter Slusser built a house in 1914 that Babe envied. Called the “tank house” it had a 2,000-gallon water tank. Babe especially envied it because his own family carried water up in buckets to his own house.

Where Diekmann’s is now, there was a two-story hotel. Babe recalled it had a big dining room, a bar, a big dance hall and stage. Stables were below the hotel, on the beach. For dances they brought their own piano, played by his older sister. Babe played saxophone, his brother played drums, and his younger sister did the entertaining. Good times were had by all.

Babe, named after his grandfather Samuel Talmadge, was born in Sebastopol in 1901. An avid baseball fan, Babe pitched for Santa Rosa High School. When his grandfather retired, he gave his Hop Farm, located by Mark West Creek, to his daughter, Babe’s mother, Hattie Mae. Babe’s grandfather and later his stepfather, Frank Wood, were successful hop farmers. Babe enjoyed farming and looked forward to a career as a farmer.

In the late 1920’s, Babe’s parents, Hattie May and Frank Wood bought an REO Flying Cloud. Babe proudly introduced the car in Santa Rosa. A natural entrepreneur, Babe quickly bought the entire stock. He sold so many REO Speedwagons that REO Motor Car Company, in Lansing, Michigan, created an advertisement with a picture of Babe on a REO Speedwagon in the Wood Family hopyard.

Babe opened his own car dealership in 1926. Babe’s son, Samuel Talmadge “Sam” Wood, Jr., born in 1935, took over the car dealership in 1971, but Babe continued to play a role in selling cars for many years after. Locals might even remember Babe Wood’s enthusiastic TV ads in the 1970’s, promoting his Cadillac/Pontiac/Mazda dealership on Auto Row in Santa Rosa. Fifty years later in 1976, the business moved to Corby Ave.

Babe died in 2004 at the age of 103. Sam Jr. eventually sold the dealership to Hansel Auto Group in 2007. Sam Jr. passed away in August 2022.

*Note: FROM THE ARCHIVES is curated by Robin Rudderow. A good part of this story is Babe’s own telling in a 1994 interview by members of the Rancho Bodega Historical Society.



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http://www.ranchobodega.org/membership_form.pdf

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBER

Tania Mantua

Welcome to Spud Point Crab Company as an Advertiser

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IN THIS ISSUE

Babe Wood - Hop Farmer



Babe was born in Sebastopol in 1901. His divorced mother married Frank Wood who loved farming. The hop business was profitable for the Wood family and Babe was a born farmer.

Ocean View House in Salmon Creek



In Salmon Creek is the old “Ocean View House”, built in 1868 by Hugh Marshall, as a hotel, a post office, and a stagecoach stop.

FALL EVENTS

Abalone: The Remarkable History and Uncertain Future of California’s Iconic Shellfish, Saturday, October 8th, 2-3 PM, Tomales Regional History Center: Conference Room 26701 California 1 Tomales, CA. Written by our speaker Ann Vilesis, she chronicles the remarkable story of our human relationship with an animal that we’ve cherished for its iridescent shell and savory meat for millennia. <www.tomaleshistory.com/>

La Crema Estate Picnic at the Grove, Saturday, October 8th, 11-3 PM Grab your friends for a summer picnic series at Richard’s Grove at the beautiful La Crema Estate at Saralee’s Vineyard. Spend a Saturday afternoon enjoying La Crema wine, food, lawn games and local music. Tickets include lunch from TIPS Tri-Tip Trolley (vegetarian items available). Wine will be available for purchase. <<https://www.lacrema.com/lc-event/>>

Sturgeon's Mill Historic Steam Sawmill Demonstration Run, Saturday, October 15th, 10-3, 2150 Green Hill Rd, Sebastopol. Join us for live demonstrations of our 108 year old Steam Powered Sawmill under the historic giant redwoods. The cook shack will be open for delicious lunchtime snacks and meals that you can enjoy in our beautiful redwood picnic grounds. Free parking is available. FREE <<http://www.sturgeonsmill.com/>>

Farmers Market Is Open: Sun 10-2, October 1st-30th, Formed to provide residents of Bodega Bay and surrounding communities with fresh, locally grown products and to provide farmers with a venue to sell their farm fresh products directly to the consumers. The open-air market thrives behind the Bodega Bay Community Center at the north end of town. <<https://bodegabaycommunitycenter.org/farmers-market/>>

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>>