

RANCHO BODEGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sonoma Coast Doghole Ports Project

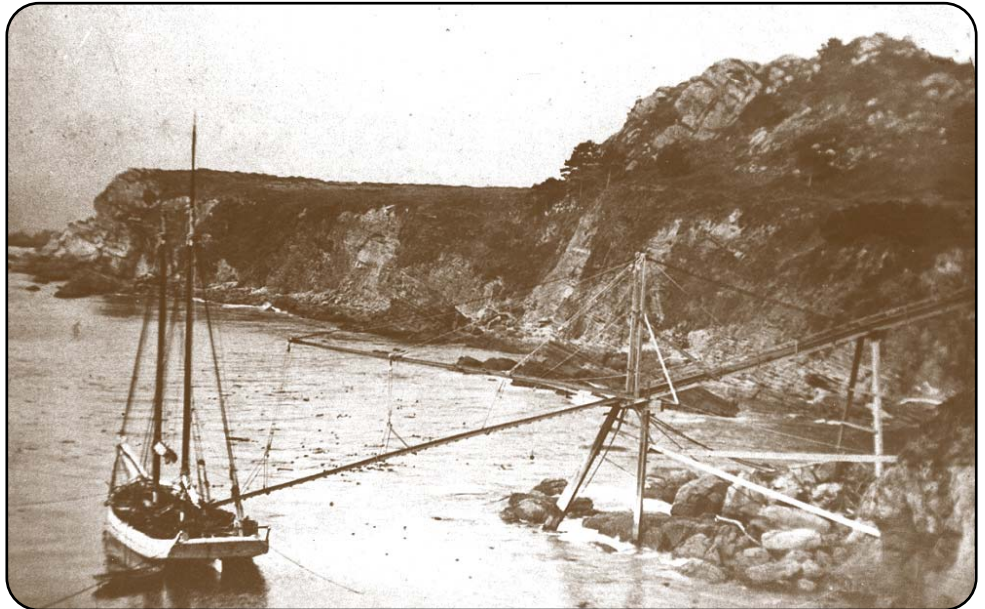
NOAA's Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

If you are interested in the history of shipwrecks and remains of the old “dog hole ports” I know you will be excited and interested to hear that a new historical society is forming in Bodega Bay. The Redwood Coast landscape is dotted with evidence of how the lumber trade adapted to the rugged marine environment allowing the business to flourish from the mid-19th century into the 20th century.

The rugged coast had few roads and no long distance railroads so the most cost effective way to move lumber was by sea. Lumbering operations established sawmills, including Rancho Bodega's original land grant holder, Captain Stephen Smith, along the shoreline at the few places where it was possible to temporarily anchor a vessel.

These “doghole ports,” so named because they were so small and exposed that mariners joked they were barely large enough for a dog to turn around, became centers of economic activity. Enterprising lumbermen rigged a network of chutes and cables extending from the bluffs down into small coves allowing lumber

to be transferred from shore to waiting ship. A fleet of small, maneuverable schooners and eventually steamers carried the timber to markets as close as San Francisco and as distant as the Eastern Seaboard, Australia and Asia. The trade left not only place names, but the archaeological remains of the infrastructure and in some cases those vessels unlucky enough to be lost on these shores. - Robin Rudderow ■



FROM THE ARCHIVES

When Hitch and The Birds Came to the Coast

by Andrea Granahan

In the early 60s Alfred Hitchcock was ‘The Man’ in Hollywood. Not only did he have an immensely popular television series but he had just made the box office hit movie *Psycho*. He wanted to make another. In 1961 he read Daphne du Maurier’s short story *The Birds* and hired a screenplay writer to turn it into a script.

He discovered Bodega Bay while shooting his film *Without a Doubt* in Santa Rosa. The location crew came to Bodega Bay to scout for settings and to find lodgings for everyone. There wasn’t much choice in those days. It was The Tides or a campground. Hollywood may throw money around in some places but when it comes to locations they are penny-pinchers. They tried to bargain with Wanda Zankich, then owner of The Tides, but they met their match. On the 30th anniversary of the film’s release in 1963, Wanda said in an interview “They told me they would put Bodega Bay on the map and wouldn’t I cut the prices. I told them those are my rates, what I always charge. Take it or leave it. They took it.”

They decided to use Rose Gaffney’s house on the west side of the bay. Rose was still battling with PG&E over her land and was extremely wary, but the Location Chief charmed her. The house was run down, Rose was just using it as a weekend retreat then. They rebuilt the entire façade and added a barn and a gazebo to shoot the birthday party scene. After the film, the late Donna Freeman bought the gazebo at Rose’s estate sale and moved it to her *Compass Rose Gardens* (*Secret Gardens*). Many couples have been married under the gazebo including some of Donna’s children.

Hitch used locals as extras as he cinematically combined Bodega and Bodega Bay into one town. He and the cast got to know everyone while the towns had fun watching Hollywood at work making “movie magic”. People told a lot of stories about the filming during the anniversary celebration in 1993.

When they filmed Tippi Hedren, dressed in her green

suit and mink coat she wore in almost every scene, she slipped and fell into the ice cold Bay. While everyone else scrambled to rescue her, Hitch simply turned to his assistant and said in his slow, notable British accent,



FROM THE ARCHIVES

“We are going to need another mink.”

Some of the film crew had the nasty job of going to the dump to film seagulls. They tied rotten meat to their cameras to get the birds dodging right into the camera. Real and phony birds were used in the filming. Some of phony crows found a home at the Casino in Bodega where Hitch and the cast enjoyed libations.

Whenever Hitch drove up from the city in his limo he had pockets full of matchbooks from San Francisco’s famous eateries and night clubs. He handed them out to the local kids. He seemed to have had a soft spot for children.

While filming the scene when Tippi finds Suzanne Pleshette’s body pecked to death by birds, a school bus let out a first grader at the corner. As the little girl walked home she saw Pleshette in her make-up and fainted. She was carried to her house. Hitch stopped the filming and went into the home where the child lay on a couch with Pleshette and the make-up artist. He had the artist remove and then redo the make-up until finally the child laughed. Hitch got up and went out to resume filming saying, “Good. She won’t have nightmares now.”

He let the locals watch while they set up scenes as long as when the clapper cried “Action!” everyone ducked out of sight. While the filming went on Hitch endeared himself to locals, but was apparently stalking Tippi Hedren. The film *The Girl* was made in 2012, and Tippi was very candid in interviews.

Hitch became the High Lord in Bodega Bay. He had English sole flown from Britain while he was in town. That annoyed Wanda Zankich. “I told him our local fish was fresher, but he insisted. I thought he was a snob but before long we learned to like each other.”

When the film was shown during the anniversary celebrations in Bodega, it was like opening up an old family album. Instead of succumbing to the

horror and suspense, people called out to each other.

“Look at what a hottie Glenice was!”

“Stevie, you’re so little then.”

“How’d they make Rose’s old house look so good?”

Just two films that qualify as “folk movies”. One is *Gone with the Wind* in the South, and other is *The Birds* in Bodega and Bodega Bay. ■



Thank you to Bruce and Connie Martin for their generous donation of *The Birds* photos to RBHS, taken when they were young students at SRJC.



VALLEY FORD

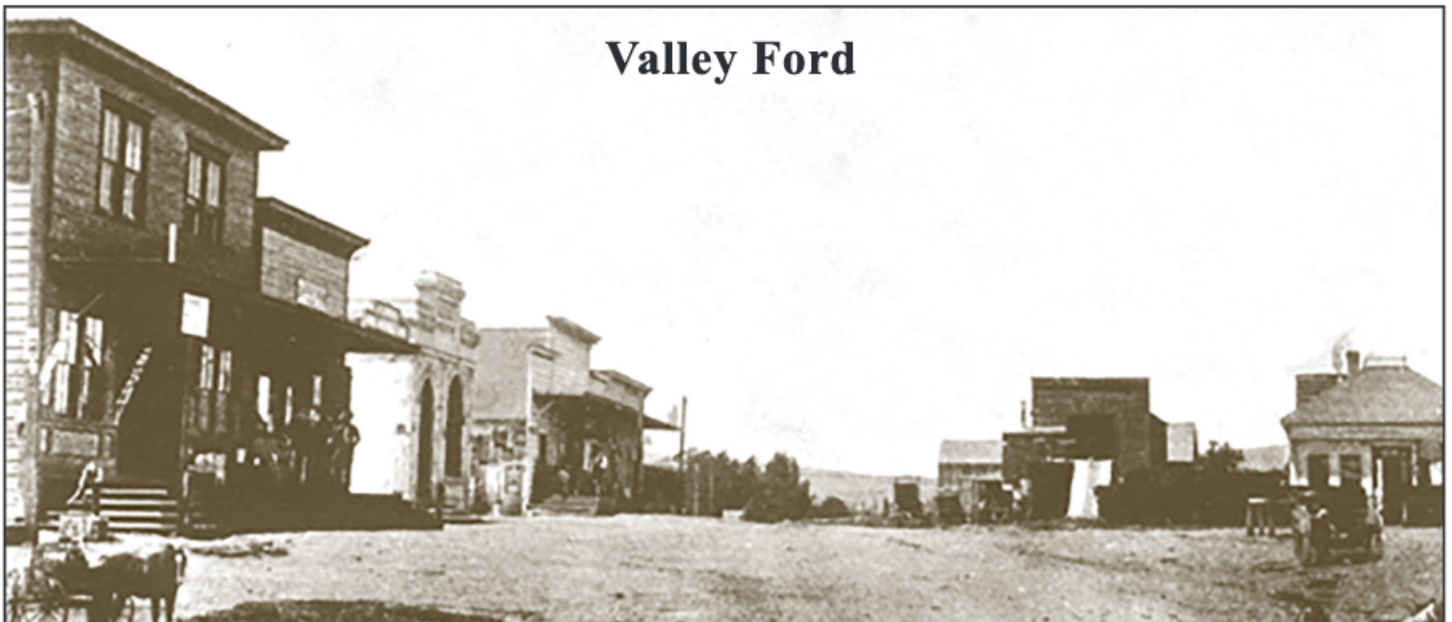
Highway 1, Valley Ford California

by Susan Teel - 2015

The town of Valley Ford is situated on the Estero Americano, four miles from its mouth. The old Spanish and Indian trail leading from the interior ranchos to Tomales Bay and the coast crossed the Estero. Hence, the name which was given to the farm and subsequently the town. At the point the trail forked and the one which led up to the valley, was the route traveled from Bodega Rancho to Sausalito. The Indians in the back country journeyed on this trail to the coast at Tomales Bay a few times a year for the purpose of feasting on shell fish and gathering shells to exchange goods. After 1857, the Coast Miwok ceased these travels.

Stephen L. Fowler and James E. Fowler arrived in San Francisco in May, 1849. After many hardships, chance brought them to Big Valley, better known as the valley of the Estero Americano, then an unfenced wilderness. They settled where the trail crossed the Estero and purchased F.G. Blume's six hundred and forty acres of land lying between the Ebabias Creek and the Estero. In July, they built a house two hundred yards from the ford. Whitehead Fowler came to Valley Ford in 1852. In May, 1854, Stephen C. Fowler and his wife, the parents of Stephen, James and Whitehead Fowler, arrived with their other three sons, John H., Benjamin and Nathaniel Fowler. Mrs. Fowler was the first female resident of the town. The Fowlers were joined by Thomas Smith who had been engaged in running a saw mill. He had purchased land and had planted potatoes. In 1856, Thomas was running a grist mill with horses, and then two years later, a steam engine and the mill soon became famous for the quality of its flour.

In the fall of 1861, Daniel Hall opened a blacksmith shop, John H. Fowler opened a general merchandise business, a bridge was built across the creek and James E. Fowler opened a lumber yard. In 1863 a Methodist Church was built and in 1864, the Valley Ford Hotel was built by J.N. Rien. By the summer of 1876, the North Pacific Coast Railroad Company extended their tracks through the town and built a depot. The travel time from Valley Ford to San Francisco was now four hours, compared to hauling goods 18 miles to Petaluma, and then to San Francisco.



Valley Ford

VALLEY FORD

Valley Ford is probably best known for the controversial and famous building of Christo and Jeanne-Claude's, "Running Fence". The "Fence", completed on September 10, 1976, ran smack through Valley Ford and dominated landscape in Marin and Sonoma counties. The "Fence" crossed 14 roads and the private property of 59 ranchers to reach the Pacific Ocean near Bodega Bay. The required environmental impact report for the piece was 450 pages long. It brought a mixture of international journalists, environmental protesters, passionate art lovers and curious gawkers. The fence was 24.5 miles long and was 18 feet high. It was composed of 2,050 panels of white nylon fabric hung from steel cables by means of 350,000 hooks. It was removed 14 days later, leaving no visible trace.



Today, Valley Ford still hosts the Valley Ford Hotel, now known for the Rocker Oysterfeller's Restaurant on the first floor and for the seven pet-friendly rooms on the second floor. Dinucci's Restaurant still stands and serves family style Italian and seafood dinners. This Restaurant originally served passengers riding the North Coast Pacific Railroad. There is also the Valley Ford Market, a family-owned business and a farmers and ranchers grocery, and the Estero Café which serves local, organic produce and meats, typically from within a five to ten mile radius.



In 2015, the Valley Ford Wool Mercantile and Wool Mill processed local California wool that has been raised a short distance from the Mill. It specialized in custom wool production for bedding, outerwear, cushions stuffing or custom fabrics and wool felting materials for local fiber artists. It provided educational tours and workshops on the benefit of natural wool products, felting, spinning, weaving and knitting. The Mill processed fibers from Navajo Churro, Shetland, Alpaca, Llama and Angora, to name a few. The Mercantile sold eco and natural clothing, organic bedding, local cheeses, organic foods and jewelry. On May 16-17, 2015, there was the second Valley Ford Wool Festival that included demonstrations on sheep shearing, wool grading, needle felting, and music and food. ■



BODEGA BAY COMMUNITY

Safety First ! Coming Together to make Bodega Bay's Fishing Fleet Safer

Wave of Compassion Foundation (WOCF) steps up and leads the way.

Fishing is the heart of Bodega Bay, and unfortunately our fishermen are in trouble.

Salmon season, our primary catch has been closed for two years. The second largest catch Dungeness Crab, was hampered when the season opened late, well after the holidays when people gather and celebrate with the local delicacy.

Boats and their gear require constant maintenance, even when fishing season is closed. Costs are rising. Their livelihood is dangerous, wet and freezing cold yet fishermen are drawn to the sea to catch protein-rich, wild fresh fish.

Fire extinguishers need recharging & certification typically in Santa Rosa. WOCF eliminated the trip by bringing the service to Spud Point. And they paid for it.

Essential, strong, waterproof gear is survival gear. WOCF supplied "crab proof" gloves, boots, jackets, pants, hats and socks for 63 fishermen/women in our local fishing fleet.

Life rafts cost \$800 - \$2200 annually to update and pack. Lifesaving equipment like flares, emergency beacons and the equipment that automatically releases the life raft when a vessel sinks are essential.

Major funding support came from proceeds from Fisherman's Festival, the Bodega Bay Fire Foundation and generous individuals in our community. The work continues. You can contribute by going to: www.wavesofcompassionfoundation.org/donate. Using the drop down menu for fishermen.


We simply can't thank our community, Fisherman's Festival and Bodega Bay Fire Foundation enough for their donations. ■



Patty Ginochio & Carolyn Connors



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



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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

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IN THIS ISSUE

When Hitch Came to the Coast

In the early 60s Alfred Hitchcock was 'The Man' in Hollywood. In 1961 he read Daphne du Maurier's short story *The Birds* and hired a screenplay writer to turn it into a script.



Valley Ford California

The town of Valley Ford is situated on the old Spanish and Indian trail to Tomales Bay. The Indians used to journey on this trail to the coast.



SUMMER EVENTS

BODEGA BAY FARMERS MARKET. Bodega Bay Community Center, 2255 CA-1, Sun, 10 AM – 2 PM. Memorial Day until the end of October. The open-air market thrives behind the Bodega Bay Community Center at the north end of town. Offering the freshest, locally grown produce specializing in organic, heirloom and gourmet varieties of fruits and vegetables, beef, goat, duck, pork, poultry and fish.

PETALUMA MUSIC FESTIVAL Saturday, July 27. 17th Annual, Petaluma Music Festival, Sonoma-Marin Fairgrounds, 11:30 AM to 9:30 PM Our goal is simple: "Keeping music in the schools". The Petaluma Music Festival Board of Directors believe passionately in the positive influence of music in children's lives. Proceeds from this annual event will be distributed among Petaluma's public elementary and secondary schools to provide funding for their music programs.
 Tickets online (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/petaluma-music-festival-tickets-850079409397>)

GRAVENSTEIN APPLE FAIR August 10 & 11, 10 am to 6 pm, Ragle Ranch Park, Sebastopol, CA. Enjoy live music on two stages, all things Gravenstein in our new "Apple Alley", fabulous local food, art & crafts vendors, activities for kids, farm animals and demonstrations, craft ciders, microbrews, premium wines, and VIP Lounge. Tickets online (<https://gravensteinapplefair.com/>)

SNOOPY'S ICE SKATING LESSONS. Each eight-week Lesson Set, skaters progress through one Level within a Skating Track. At the end of a Lesson Set, skaters are evaluated to determine whether they pass their current Level or will need improvement and will need to repeat their current Level. The Tracks follow the curriculum set forth by Learn to Skate USA, endorsed by United States Figure Skating. For detailed curriculum, please contact: Snoopy's Home Ice: 1667 West Steele Lane, Santa Rosa, California 95403 or 707-546-7147.

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