



Photo: Woody Elliott

# The Bagpiper

## The Inverness Association & Foundation Fall 2023

### Membership Renewals Support Our Work

Dear Inverness Association Member,

It is time for you to renew your membership for 2024 in the Inverness Association. Make your tax-deductible contribution to the Inverness Foundation. Please use the enclosed envelope or pay online at [invernessassociation.org/membership](http://invernessassociation.org/membership). Dues are \$35 for an individual, and \$50 for a family.

This past year, the Inverness Association has been working hard to make Inverness a better place. We are all volunteers; there is no paid staff.

Our ongoing projects include:

- Maintaining the many trails that make Inverness a walkable community.
- Reviewing development proposals.
- Commenting on the Marin County proposed short term rental policy. It is based on a survey we made of Inverness property owners and residents.
- Reducing fire danger through Fire Wise Inverness and removing highly flammable vegetation from our property on Vision Road. A fire in this vegetation would threaten evacuation routes on Vision Road and Sir Francis Drake Blvd. We have developed a plan to replant the area with appropriate native vegetation, and we are waiting County approval of our plan.
- Putting on the Inverness Fair, attended by hundreds in our community.
- Keeping up the Gables, which hosts the Inverness Public Library. The importance of this facility can be seen in the trouble Bolinas has had hosting a Post Office.
- Our volunteers work with Inverness Garden Club to

maintain the landscaping in the Inverness Median Strip, and at the library.

- Maintaining our other properties, which serve the public in many ways. These include Plant Park and Martinelli Park in downtown Inverness, as well as various properties allowing coastal access along Tomales Bay.
- Working with the County and other agencies to increase the resilience of the Tomales Bay shoreline in Inverness to sea level rise. This includes our own property at Martinelli Park.
- Communicating with our sister organizations in other Marin County coastal communities to coordinate our responses to proposed county, state, and federal activities.
- Hosting our annual meeting, addressed by our County Supervisor, Dennis Rodoni.

You can continue to rely on your all-volunteer Inverness Association Board of Directors to keep close eyes on every aspect of life in Inverness, in order to protect property values, adapt to climate change, and increase the pleasure of living and owning property in Inverness. We do all this on a budget of less than \$25,000, so your generous membership contribution makes a big difference.

Please make your tax-deductible membership donation to the Inverness Foundation, and help us keep Inverness the BEST place to live in Marin County (and the world!).

*William Barrett, President  
Inverness Association*

# The 8th State of Tomales Bay Conference

In late September, the Tomales Bay Foundation (TBF) welcomed 110 attendees to the 8th State of Tomales Bay Conference, Conservation Challenges in a Changing Climate, at the Inverness Yacht Club.

Held since 1988, the TBF board and advisory volunteers worked for months to put together the conference. Participants learned, networked with new and old friends, and celebrated this wonderful and unique Tomales Bay. The diverse agenda of speakers included professionals, public servants, students, poets, practitioners and even our County Supervisor Rodoni and State Assembly Member Connolly.

We heard about current Tomales Bay academic research, fire, sea level rise, agriculture, mariculture, restoration, ground water, people, and stewardship of diverse ecosystems of this unique bay and watershed. KWMR's Amanda Eichstaedt was emcee. A brilliant keynote was presented by Sasha Berleman, Audubon Canyon Ranch's Fire Boss and Fire Forward program director. David Mitchell, Keira Monuki, and Frankie Gerraty, 3 of the 5 TBF graduate student researchers presented the work they did with grants this year from the Foundation. Gene Ptak read a poetic tribute to Richard Plant, our mentor and Conference founder, specially written by Michael Whitt. All fifteen presentations are available at [tomalesbayfoundation.org](http://tomalesbayfoundation.org).

We carefully planned a waste-free event. Madeline Hope, Rosa Rodriguez, and Francine Allen planned and perfectly presented a great lunch. Many thanks for the generosity of Bovine Bakery for morning pastries, Toby's for fruit, and local cookie-makers.

## Complexity - Many Interactions



Richard Plant - View of Tomales Bay

More thanks to our other volunteers and board: Sarah Allen, Liza Crosse, Amanda Eichstaedt, Woody Elliott, Tom Gaman, Mike Giammona, Richard James, Ron Mallory, Michael Neuman, Ed Nute, Gene Ptak, Dallas Smith, Rebecca Smith-Bindman, and Michael Whitt. They were all involved in putting together this memorable program.

By Tom Gaman

## Looking Back ..... and Forward

My Fellow Inverness Association Members,

After 8 years as President of the IA, I have turned over the gavel to William Barrett.

Here is what I am most proud of us accomplishing together:

- We accepted the bequest of the Leah Crane's property on Aberdeen Way and donated the property

to CLAM as permanent affordable housing, while meeting Ms. Crane's objectives to preserve the wild portions of the property.

- The revival of the Inverness Fair after its pandemic hiatus. Alex Porrata has done an amazing job rounding up the non-profits, entertainment, and food purveyors. Elizabeth Whitney corralled the vendors.



## Looking Back ..... and Forward, cont. from p 2.

Mike Parkinson designs the posters, passports, and the prizes. The Inverness Garden Club returned with berry jam, plants, and more.

- Keeping our historic Gables Inverness library building in working order. We now meet ADA requirements. Volunteer Inverness Garden Club gardeners keep up the yard with big-project assistance from local contractors. We have converted almost all the lighting in the building to save energy. We put on a new roof, rebuilt a window destroyed when a tree crashed into it, repaired dry rot and insect damage in both the Gables and the Museum annex, and more. I managed to preserve our insurance, despite cancellation difficulties.

- Kudos to Tom Gaman and John Longstreth as our volunteer team of trail tenders. **But they need help! We have volunteer insurance, so any of you can help clearing trails, installing anti slip treads on bridges and general upkeep.** Also, just this fall, Jerry Meral and crew stepped up to remove pyrophytic trees at our property by the tennis courts on Vision Road. An enormous load was removed by the Chipper program, reducing fire danger.

I will remain involved in maintaining the Gables and helping the IA in other ways.

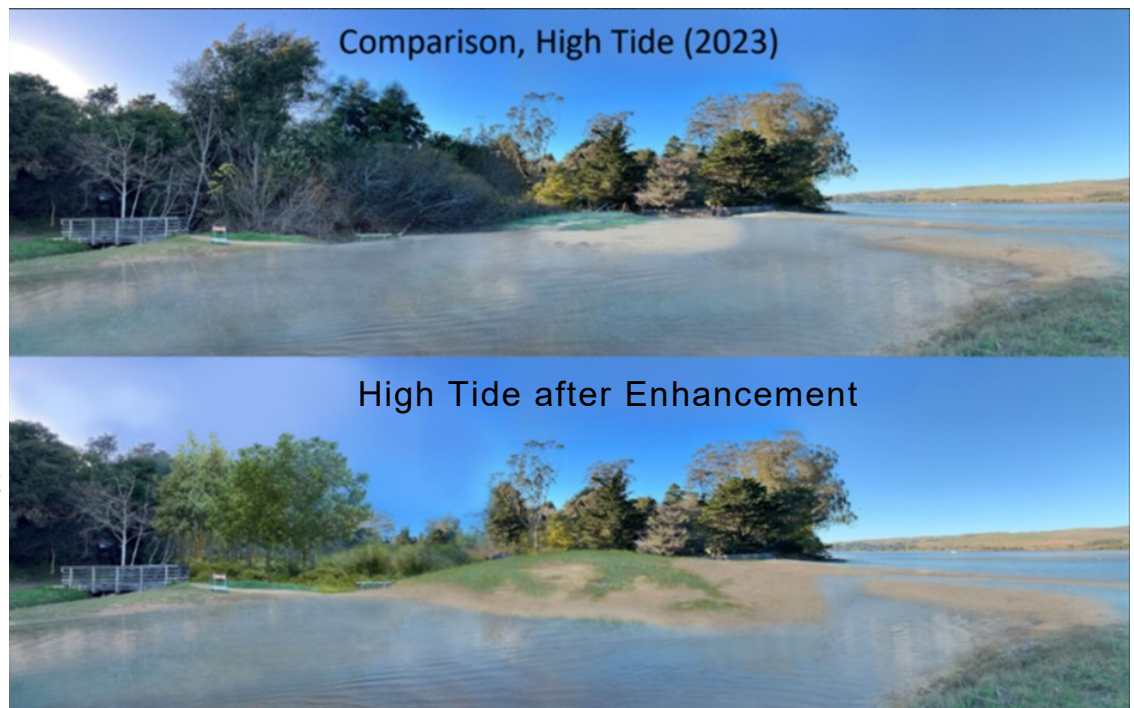
*Sincerely, Kathy Hartzell*

## Chicken Ranch Beach Wetland Enhancement Project

The Tomales Bay Foundation

(TBF) has received a grant from the State Coastal Conservancy to enhance wetlands in the Tomales Bay shoreline at Chicken Ranch Beach. TBF has hired Prunuske Chatham, Inc. (PCI), an ecological restoration company, to do hydraulic modeling, engineering plans, permitting, CEQA, and all the details required to permit this project located on the state, federal and county lands just west of the beach. PCI has presented plans in person to the TBF advisory committee, and Marin County Parks held a public meeting on September 27. A recording of the meeting is available at [tomalesbayfoundation.org](http://tomalesbayfoundation.org). Some of the excavated

### RENDERING OF A POSSIBLE OUTCOME



materials may even be used to sustain Chicken Ranch as sea levels rise. Public comments will be welcome. As of now we hope to ready the shovel in 2025. Here are before and after images of prepared by the consultant.

# Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History

The Inverness Association hosts the Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History. The Museum archives are located behind the Gables: the Inverness Public Library. Some members of the Inverness Association Board of Directors also serve on the board of the Jack Mason Museum. The Museum is preparing to publish a history of Inverness written by Dewey Livingstone, a member of the Jack Mason

Museum Board of Directors. The Museum prepared interesting exhibits this year at the Library about early life in Inverness, and the history of the Inverness Public Utility District.

The following article is written by Courtney Linn, treasurer of the Inverness Association, and member of the Jack Mason Museum board of directors.

## Early Inverness Watercolors

A book appeared last year entitled: *Discovering Charlotte Hersey Colby: California Landscape Painting and Her Times*. It draws attention to an extraordinary painter. In the words of historian Dewey Livingston, Charlotte's paintings "tell more than a mere image can: a feeling, an impression, even a sound." The book was written and researched by two of Charlotte's great nieces, Jean McClure Mudge (author) and Katharine Hermann (collaborating researcher).

Charlotte (called "Lottie" by her friends) painted landscapes in the period from 1895 to 1916. She lived in Oakland and later Berkeley. Beginning in the late 1890s, she regularly visited Inverness and painted plein air. Her earliest Inverness landscape paintings date to 1899. The Highland Lodge guest book records Charlotte making several visits to Inverness in the period from 1905 to 1911. Her painting, *A Bit of Inverness*, was exhibited at Berkeley's Hillside Club in March 1914.

The Inverness Foundation maintains walking paths and footbridges. The footbridges have been with us a long time, but we do not know how long. A painting that Charlotte did during an 1899 visit to Inverness (see below) suggests the footbridges have been with us a very long time indeed.

*by Courtney Linn*



Charlotte Hersey Colby *Footbridge, 1899*  
Courtesy of Margo Moorhouse

## Elk in Inverness?

Some Inverness Association members have asked: If the elk fence in Point Reyes National Seashore comes down, will we have elk in Inverness?

Many people in the United State live with elk as neighbors, especially on the Pacific Coast, including northern California, and in the Rocky Mountains.

But Inverness residents are not about to join them.

Our tule elk seem to prefer areas of open grasslands and low coastal scrub with coyote brush. The forests are not generally the preferred habitat of tule elk, although some females are around the forests and meadows of Glen Camp toward the southern and western side of Inverness Ridge.

Free ranging elk have been present for quite a while on the western flanks of Inverness Ridge at the Home Ranch east of Drakes Estero, but so far none have crossed Inverness Ridge. If they did, then they most likely would prefer the open grasslands of the Olema Valley.

In any case, tule elk, like our black-tailed deer, generally avoid and are not hostile to humans. Since elk are much larger than deer, they would pose a greater danger to drivers and their cars from

collisions.

Other wildlife of interest include bears. Marin County is reputed to have as many as five breeding female bears. As bears become more common and learn how to topple our garbage bins, they may become a problem for people who do not secure their garbage



prior to pick up day.

Racoons are plentiful in Inverness, and, like bears, are quite adept at opening trash bins. Please secure your trash and don't put anything in your bin that might smell good to a raccoon until pick up day. If you have guests, please put a prominent note in your house instructions about this. Thanks for keeping Inverness tidy!

*By Jerry Meral*

## Winter Storm Preparation

As the days get shorter and the threat of fire lessens, I think about the pending El Nino with its potential for disastrous winter storms. So, check your drains and gutters to make sure they can handle upcoming downpours. Gather items for your Go Bag: medicines, copies of important documents, warm clothes, and a flashlight. Consider what you might need to stay put during a prolonged power outage and or road closure resulting from tree falls and mudslides.

We have an updated guide to West Marin Emergency Resources. Paper copies are available for households and short-term rentals from me or at the Inverness Fire House. You can download a copy to your phone, email it to a friend, or print it yourself at: [invernesspud.org/idc-emergency-resources](http://invernesspud.org/idc-emergency-resources)

*Ann Elliott, Coordinator idccs2022@mail.com*

Inverness Disaster Council

[invernesspud.org/inverness-disaster-council](http://invernesspud.org/inverness-disaster-council)

# Inverness Association & Foundation

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## **Support our work!** All memberships need to be renewed now.

The Inverness Foundation, a 501(c)3, owns and maintains the town trails and spaces and *The Gables*, home of the Inverness Library.

**Your dues and other contributions are tax deductible.**

Memberships are for a calendar year. Join now by sending a check to:

### **Inverness Foundation**

PO Box 382

Inverness, CA 94937

Or scan this QR code and pay online via PayPal.



*The Bagpiper*

Fall 2023

