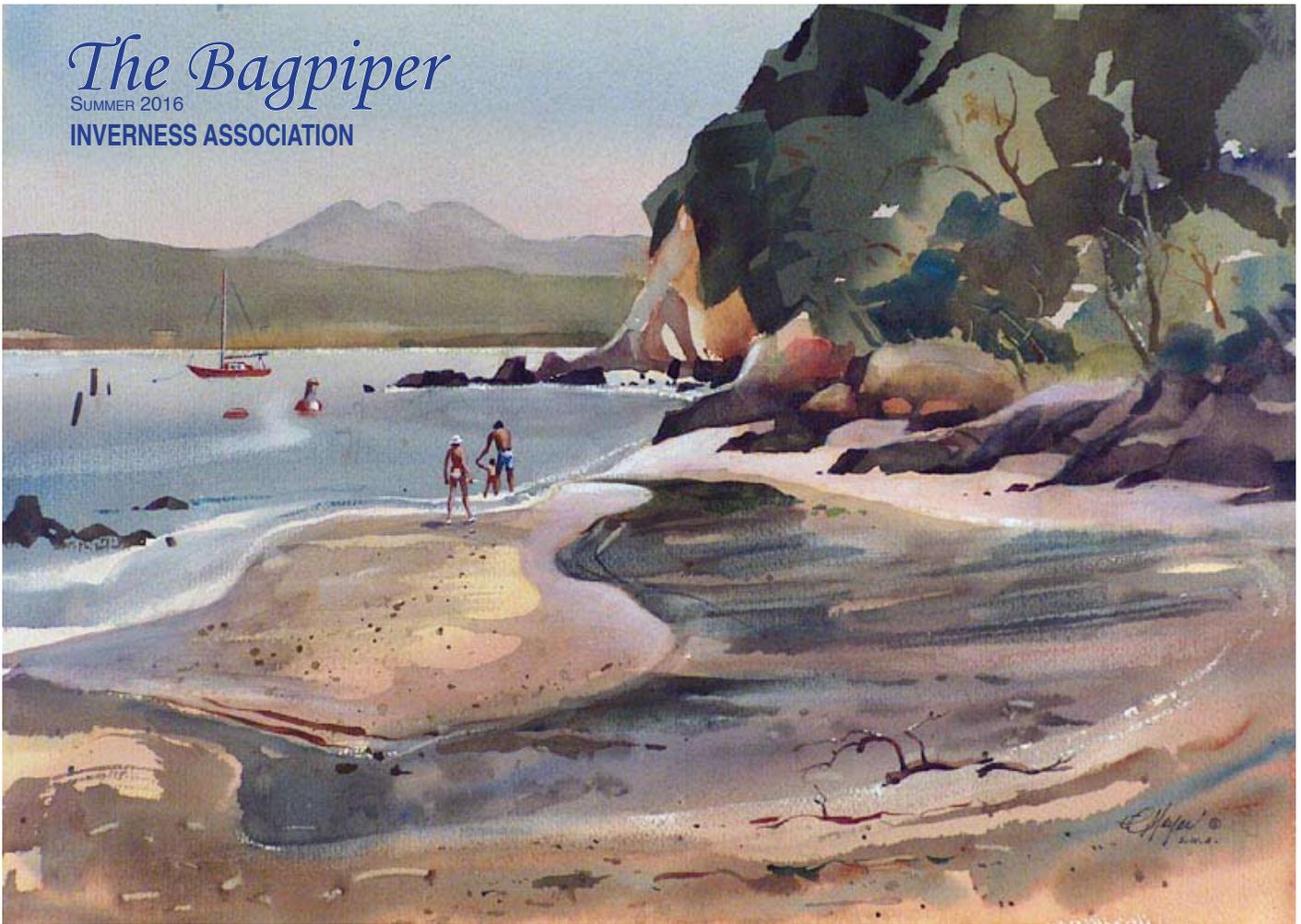


# The Bagpiper

SUMMER 2016

INVERNESS ASSOCIATION



Laurel Meyer of Forestville remembers her father, the late El Meyer (1910-2001) painting prolifically in the late 1990s, when this watercolor of Shell Beach was probably done. El Meyer painted scenes plein air throughout Marin and Sonoma Counties. © El Meyer's Estate.

## Summer means happy times and good sunshine.

*It means going to the beach...having fun.*

—Brian Wilson, 2004



**FOURTH OF JULY RACES**  
Inverness Firehouse Green, 10 a.m.



**Inverness Association  
Annual Meeting**

July 9

7:00 p.m. socializing

7:30 p.m. meeting

Inverness Yacht Club

Open to everyone



**INVERNESS FAIR**

Saturday August 13

Firehouse Green. Free!

Book Sale to benefit the Inverness Library

Pancake Breakfast at 8 am

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ANY TIME AN ORGANIZATION has a board with more than a third new members, as we did last July, there is need for orientation and organization. We have been busy.

Our Bylaws Committee set out to review the bylaws and I have met with Dakota Whitney of Martha Howard's law office to go over the proposed updates. The changes the Committee proposes pertain to transparency, conflict of interest, improved clarity and how we communicate. Toward that end, we would be grateful if you include your email address as you renew your membership. Our bylaws are clear that members approve anything that might have to do with selling or buying any property. We also formalized the role of the Jack Mason Museum as a permanent committee of the Inverness Foundation.

Frankly, when I began as a board member, I was unclear as to why there were two organizations, the Inverness Association and the Inverness Foundation. The IA was formed in 1930 as the Inverness Improvement Association and the Inverness Foundation was formed in 1966 when there was an estate distribution that warranted having the 501(c)(3) status. Both are tax-exempt public benefit organizations, but only the IF can bestow tax deductibility for a contribution.

Our design review and agency/planning review role falls under the Inverness Association. The IA also sponsors the annual fair in August. It is the IF which owns property, and as long as that property meets certain public benefit criteria, it is exempt from ad valorem property taxation. Every parcel we own pays the same use and parcel taxes that you pay on your property (fire, schools, bonds). We must file very detailed paperwork annually attesting to the uses of our proper-

ties in order to maintain the exemptions.

The West Marin Fund has awarded us a modest grant to bring in an architect specializing in historic structures to review the work to date on the Gables, to determine the improvements and maintenance we need to do to preserve this lovely asset for decades to come. The end result will be a capital improvement plan for building enabling us to budget for major work (a new roof, for example) and other improvements that will ensure its longevity.

We welcome members of the community to our Committees; you don't have to be a board member to be of great assistance with buildings, trails, the Jack Mason Museum and the Inverness Fair.

We will have time for questions at the Annual Membership Meeting. However, any time you want to ask something, don't hesitate to send a note to [president@invernessassociation.org](mailto:president@invernessassociation.org)

Yours,  
Kathy Hartzell, President



Kathy Hartzell

Photo by Elizabeth Whitney

## Learn About Owls at the Annual Summer Meeting

We are fortunate to have long-time Inverness resident David Press speaking at our annual meeting July 9. His subject will be the Northern Spotted Owl, a resident of old-growth forests from British Columbia south to Marin. Dave Press has studied the spotted owl for many years and shares many characteristics with the elusive, highly valued bird.

Both have long family histories in Inverness, are monogamous, live in the forest, have ties to the federal government (either as a protected species or as a biologist for the National Seashore) and are genetically distinct from the more aggressive barred owls that have begun to invade Spotted Owl territory.

—Catherine Caufield

**The Inverness Association and the Inverness Foundation have the same Board of Directors and both meet monthly at the Gables with back-to-back agendas.**

**The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and manages the properties it owns among its other responsibilities.**

*The Bagpiper*

INVERNESS ASSOCIATION  
INVERNESS FOUNDATION

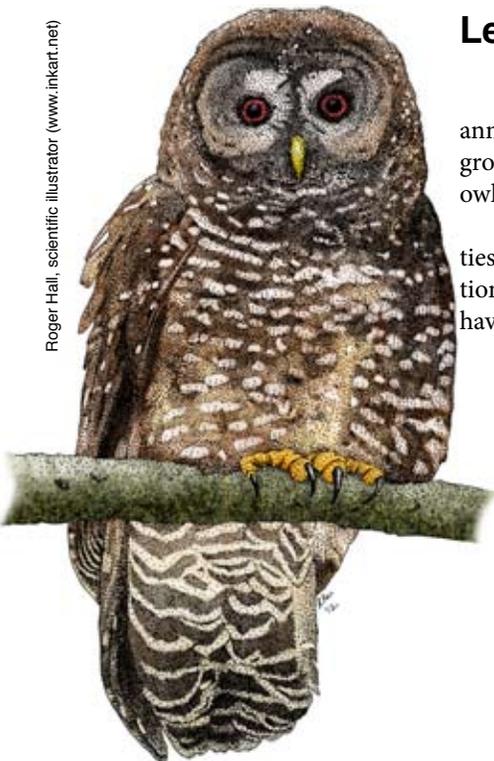
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Memberships  
**Family \$45**  
**Individual \$30**

Roger Hall, scientific illustrator (www.inkart.net)



# It's Family Fun Time Again at the Inverness Fair

THE ANNUAL INVERNESS FAIR will be held Saturday, August 13th on the Firehouse Green. Always the second Saturday in August, the Inverness Fair brings our community together for a day filled with live music, kid's entertainment, delicious food, the used book sale that benefits the Inverness Library, a fabulous plant sale, artisan wares and treasure hunting—and other surprises—all supporting our community and local non-profits.

Join us at 8 am for a Pancake Breakfast, benefiting the Papermill Creek Children's Corner Preschool. At lunchtime, the Inverness Yacht Club will grill hot dogs to benefit their summer sailing program. West Marin Community Services hosts their famous tostada booth in support of the Waterdogs. Waterdogs provides swimming lessons to local and summer children at Shell Beach.

Not to be missed is the Inverness Garden Club's plants and starters booth as well as their rummage sale. All funds go to the Garden Club Scholarship Program.



*The popular button booth at last year's Inverness Fair with Daniel Cordrey.*

## New Board Member



Seana Quinn has accepted the nomination for the IA/IF Board of Directors, replacing board member Bridger Mitchell who is retiring from six years of active involvement. Seana and her husband are 12-year Inverness residents. She is a hiker and gardener and holds a Master's Degree in Art Therapy and Clinical Psychology. She has a background in publishing and is currently working on an environmental youth program. Welcome aboard!

This year's fair will continue the tradition of live music, a cakewalk and children's entertainment. To commemorate the event, the Inverness Association has partnered with the United States Postal Service to issue a memorable pictorial postmark only at the fair. A limited edition historic Inverness post card will be available for purchase. Look out for other Inverness souvenirs only available at this special event.

We are always looking for helping hands during the fair. Would you like to get involved with the fair? Perhaps you have a knack for baking! Cakes are needed for the cakewalk. Please contact Inverness Fair Chairperson Alex Porrata at alexporrata@mac.com or (415) 669-9739. Vendors interested in setting up a booth (\$20 per space on the street) can email Elizabeth Whitney at timebandit15@gmail.com. —Alex Porrata



*The original log cabin Inverness post office was built in or around 1897 by town pioneer and first postmaster Alexander Baily. It sat in a wide spot across the street from Baily's home, The Gables. This 1905 color postcard was published by Brock Schreiber's mother, Martha. From the collection at Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History.*



When you or someone you live with has a medical emergency in the middle of the night, the next person you see after you dial 911 will most likely be an Inverness Volunteer Firefighter. The person might also be your electrician or kid's teacher. He (or she) will have jumped out of bed when an always-turned-on pager went off, thrown on some clothes and headed your way.

Life and death are up-close intimate experiences for these volunteers, whether it is a call to fight a huge fire like the Vision Fire that threatened all of Inverness in 1995, or an elder with a heart attack or a local automobile accident. The IVFD also responds to emergencies in the Bay.

The Fire Department responds to roughly 150 medical emergency calls a year. Currently serving under the fire chief are 12 active volunteers and two on-leave volunteers. The longest serving is Mike Meszaros, 49 years; followed by Jim Fox (chief), 42 years. The most recent new volunteers are Matt McClaskey (2011) and Laughty Nixdorf (2009).

The number of new volunteers coming forward to join the Volunteer Fire Department has been dwindling in the past 10 years. The Inverness Association and *The Bagpiper* encourage a resurgence of interest in the service of our community among the pool of potential firefighter volunteers. Could this be something for you?

Pay a visit to the firehouse and see what it is all about!

### Roster of Current Firefighters:

**Jim Fox, Fire Chief; joined 1974**

**Michael Meszaros, Captain; joined 1967**

**Tom Fox, Captain; joined 1984**

**Ken Fox, Captain; joined 1985**

**Brian Cassel; joined 1998**

**Burton Eubank, Captain; joined 1985-2003; rejoined 2009**

**Scott McMorrow, Captain; joined 2002**

**Jeffrey McBeth; joined 2005**

**Matt McClaskey; joined 2011**

**Elizabeth Black; joined 2009 (on leave)**

**Nicholas Gonzalez-Pomo; joined 2008**

**Brent Johnson; joined 2007**

**Laughty Nixdorf; joined 2009**

**Jonathan Van Bourg; joined 2007**

**David Williard; joined 2007**

**Eve Love; joined 1998-2003; rejoined 2011 (on leave)**



*Ginger Oldmixon and Lulu Powell like to say, "We met before we were born." Their mothers, Sarah Myers and Alex Porrata, shared the same due date and, through expecting them, became friends. In the end, Ginger and Lulu arrived 10 days apart but they haven't been apart much since.*

*They are now nine, and, while they attend different schools, they remain best friends.*

*They stepped up when I asked them to be my cub reporters for a story about the*



*Volunteer Fire Department. For Ginger, who lives up the street, the Fire Department with its comings and goings was a familiar presence but getting a tour throughout and a ride on the fire truck was a whole new experience for both of them. —Elizabeth Whitney*

# Volunteers Firefighters Are Ready for Anything

By Ginger Rose Oldmixon and Yolanda “Lulu” Powell  
Photographs by Elizabeth Whitney

WE CAME TWICE to the Fire Department. First we interviewed Jim Fox, the Fire Chief, at his office. There were a lot of telephones and radios around. Then we came back for our ride around in the fire truck, and Burton Eubank was there to meet us and answer millions of questions. Burton gave us a lot of information and a lot of what we used in this interview came from Burton.

Jim Fox is chief of the fire department. He has been so for 15 years. When we asked what his favorite tool was to use in a fire, he laughed and said, “a radio.” The scariest fire he has ever had to face was the Vision Fire in 1995. It was also the most exciting fire. He has fought many fires and responded to many medical emergencies. The scariest flood he had to face was the 1982 flood and landslide in Inverness.

Men and women can join the volunteer department; you only have to be 18 years old but you have to get a special license to drive a truck. They have drills twice a month.

We asked Burton, “How often do new firefighters join the volunteer department?” He answered, “Not very often, unfortunately, because people who might join are too busy working and taking care of their families. It costs a lot more to live here than when I joined. We need affordable houses!”

Burton’s favorite tool is a McLeod, which is a mix between a



*Captain Burton Eubank welcomes Lulu and Ginger to the firehouse.*

rake and shovel. It’s what he uses for brush fires. We learned that fire trucks are made by many car brands. The one we were going to ride weighs 34,000 pounds. It’s a Ford made in Cloverdale. He explained that it was neon green instead of red because you can see it better at night and in the fog. Fire trucks carry 500 gallons of water that they pump out of a hydrant by the Fire Station. What’s unbelievable is that they can fill it up in a matter of minutes.

After all our questions, we were really anxious to get our promised ride. When we got on to the fire truck we felt very happy and excited—and then realized how tall up it was! Burton had to give us a hand up.

Once Burton turned it on, it got very loud. It was vibrating! We tried to write down what he was saying but it was so bumpy that our writing looked like a blur. We pulled out and headed up to the mesa. We passed houses that they we knew, such Naima Yoshimoto’s house. We drove out on the highway and a car pulled over for us even though we didn’t have our sirens going. That’s the law!

We felt pretty high up...and important. I (Lulu) imagined being a firefighter in the fire truck going to a fire. When Burton joined the fire department you could still hold on in the back of the truck but now you have sit in the front with a seat belt. Sometimes the fire fighters jump in their own cars and meet the truck at the emergency.



*Jonathan Van Bourg offers watermelon as Chief Jim Fox supervises.*

*Continued on next page*



We learned that fire people have a very important job. It's not like like, "Ha, ha, I'm a firefighter and I'm important." It's like, "I'm a firefighter and people depend on me."

Being a fire volunteer is a very hard job and you have to be ready for anything. You wake when your pager calls and you don't know what you will find when you get there. They are a very important part of our community.



*One important question for Burton: When you get dressed for a fire, what do you do with your dreadlocks? He obliged by showing how he stuffs his beard down his shirt, his hair down in back, wraps his mask around his face and clamps down his helmet. All that shows are his eyes and he is ready to roll. In the intense heat of the Vision Fire his hair actually melted and his skin turned bright red like a sunburn.*

—Elizabeth Whitney



# Rep. Jared Huffman Has Coffee in Point Reyes Station



A FULL HOUSE showed up at the Osteria Stellina in Point Reyes Station on April 1 to have coffee with local Congressman Jared Huffman. Huffman represents the California's Second Congressional District, which covers all the coastal counties from Marin to the Oregon border, and his concerns frequently center on environmental issues, from the restoring the salmon fishery on the Klamath River, to protecting the tiny endangered delta smelt, to saving the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling.

In answer to local concerns about the recent legal challenge to ranching in the Point Reyes National Seashore, he stated unequivocal support for the continuation of ranching. "The Department of Interior promised long-term leases to ranchers on Seashore. We must keep the faith with Congressional intent that historic ranches stay in perpetuity. The goal is the best possible practices and management."

He also spoke of the difficult times in Congress when Republicans control what gets a hearing and what gets voted on. Bi-partisanship rarely happens. Using the word "hegemonic," he explained, "It's very punitive for Republicans if they break ranks. They are immediately challenged and told that someone will run against them in their next primary race."

On other topics, he spoke in favor of changing federal anti-marijuana laws, noting that it has been a failure and also created an underground economy of growers with no respect for the environment and caused conflict and dysfunction for businesses conducting legal operations in California. He also stated that he supports single payer for all health care, looking ahead to demographic of an increasing retired population. "10,000 baby boomers are retiring every day," he noted.

*Local ranchers, including Betty Nunes, far left, and Bob Giacomini, center, had a sit-down with their congressman after the community meeting in Point Reyes Station in April.*



*Congressman Jared Huffman and his administrative assistant Jenny Calaway get secret information from IA Board Member Marshall Livingston.*

## IA DESIGN REVIEW ACTIVITIES, 2015-16

Successfully protested a county proposal to remove Inverness from the Coastal Commission appeal area for coastal permits. Monitored county draft amendments to Local Coastal Program.

Submitted letter of support for converting Coast Guard facility in Point Reyes Station to create 36 units as affordable housing.

Reviewed several applications in Inverness, Inverness Park and Shallow Beach for new residences, additions, septic or well replacements and abandonment of a paper street.

—Bridger Mitchell

## DUES ARE DUE!

The Inverness Association & Foundation membership year goes from July 1 to June 30.

Please look at your mailing label, which tells you when your membership expires...or if it has already expired. If you are a current member, please rejoin now for next year! If your membership expired in 2015 or earlier, this will be your last copy of The Bagpiper until you rejoin. If you rejoin by June 30, you will be able to vote at the Annual Meeting.

You can put a check in the enclosed envelope or go to our website [invernessassociation.org](http://invernessassociation.org) and donate through PayPal.

Your support enables the IF and IA to continue its work on behalf the Inverness community: maintaining our beloved Inverness trail system and local parks; supporting The Gables, our HQ and the home of the Inverness Library and the Jack Mason Museum; putting on the annual Inverness Fair, where the community has fun and local non-profits raise funds; and providing support to local children's swimming, sailing, and bilingual tennis programs. Without the Inverness Association and Foundation, there would be no local forum to address issues of importance to our community.

Thank you for continuing to support the Inverness Association and Foundation.

—Catherine Caulfield, Membership Secretary  
[membership@invernessassociation.org](mailto:membership@invernessassociation.org)

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The Inverness Association meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Jack Mason Museum.  
The agenda is posted in advance on our website:  
[www.invernessassociation.org](http://www.invernessassociation.org)

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This tinted postal card depicting a posed group of Victorian children enjoying a summer day in Inverness was made before 1900. The kids are standing on Baily's pier, the first to provide boat moorings to summer residents. Alexander Baily built The Gables and was the first postmaster in the town. On the hill behind the children, partly hidden by trees, is the Marwedel house, a landmark on the corner of the County Road (today's Sir Francis Drake Highway) and the northern Inverness Way; the house was later moved up the street to make way for Brock Schreiber's grocery store, known to many in a later generation as Ritter's coffee shop and other similar businesses. At the left are the beginnings of the "downtown," with a beach bath house at the far left (First Valley beach was good for swimming back then) and the ornate gateway to the new Inverness subdivision barely visible. Attilio Martinelli's Inverness Store would soon be built, marking the beginning of the commercial part of the village. Courtesy of Alex Porrata; a copy is also in the collection of the Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History.

—Dewey Livingston