



## Easing Boathouse Restraints

By Michael Mery, IA Board of Directors

WE ALL KNOW BROCK'S BOATHOUSE just north of the village, the prominent "Launch for Hire" building and wharf, and the adjoining property known as Children's Beach. It is a familiar landmark almost a hundred years old now owned by John and Madeline Hope along with Mette Qvistgaard-Hansen and Steven Kirkeby.

The IA/IF bought the boathouse and property from the Brock Schreiber estate in approximately 1970. Several board members had childhood memories of going up the bay with Brock on either the *Kemah* or the *Queen*, two large motor launches, to spend the day at one of the beaches. In those early years, there was no road access to any of the beaches north of Chicken Ranch.

The boathouse and beach were purchased with the intent of preserving the building and assuring public access to Children's Beach. In spite of this good intention, owning the boathouse turned into a burden for the IA/IF and in it was sold in 1981, subject to deed restrictions permitting boat building, repair and boat rental or other low intensity non-residential uses.

The intent of the deed restrictions was to preserve an important part of local history at a time when there were still many local residents who knew Brock and the boathouse, had rented boats from him, and shared memories of the essential

role it and he played in their lives. He still worked in the boathouse, puttering and fixing things until his death in the early 1960s.

Meanwhile real estate values have gone ever higher and the bay continues to become ever more shallow at the south end. The beach is a faint shadow of its once large expanse. The building is in serious need of foundation work, wiring improvements and general stabilizing, plus shoring up the pier if it is to remain. Today, the deed restrictions present a conflict with the original intent: to preserve the building along with continuing public beach access.

*(Continued on page 2)*



*Preserving the historic boathouse it once owned remains an Inverness Association goal. The IA is calling into question the viability of deed restrictions that no longer serve a positive purpose.*



*A tiny paintbrush application of an herbicide to the cut stems of Pampas Grass will kill the plant, but is currently not approved for plants on county roads*

## Options Considered For Invasive Pampas Grass

PAMPAS GRASS, once native of Argentina, is now a familiar invasive plant in California, highly capable of spreading and often difficult to remove. It thrives on steep hillsides and can grow to seven feet high with giant plumes of seeds that further spread the plant.

A careful application of an herbicide has been successful in killing the plant, but is also controversial, the IA discovered. A press report mentioned the consideration being given to asking for an exemption to Marin County's no-roadside herbicide policy for this particular plant and a dozen letters were received expressing alarm at any use of herbicides.

The Board will look into alternatives and seek the participation of concerned community members on non-toxic aspects of the Pampas Grass eradication efforts. Step one in this process is cutting off seed plumes as they appear and bagging them to discourage proliferation. These can be burned to destroy the seeds.

# “The medicine you need is growing in your back yard”

—Old Welsh saying

By Melinda Leithold

WITH THIS THOUGHT IN MIND, I recently took a look at about 200 yards of the common area bordering First Valley Creek from Sir Francis Drake to the firehouse to discover which plants might lend themselves to this proposition.

On beyond the Red Alder, Himalayan Blackberry, English and Common Ivy, newly arrived Erharta erecta grass, and Vinca (Periwinkle), there are many other herbs and trees which serve us as food and medicine.

As I write it is early May. The Hawthorns are in bloom; small white petals flutter down like spring snow and the flower cluster releases a musky-sweet perfume filling the air near the Inverness library.

Hawthorn, (*Crataegus* spp) is spoken of in every herbal guide and in the oral tradition of Western herbalists as the “classic cardi tonic.” Renowned herbalist David Hoffmann devotes two full pages in his *Medical Herbalism* to Hawthorn, noting: “The herb also directly affects the cells of the heart muscle, enhancing both activity and nutrition as it gently increases the force of contraction of the heart muscle. In short, any degenerative condition of the cardio-vascular system will benefit from the use of Hawthorn.”

In late summer we will notice that the white flower clusters have changed to deep red berries. Both flowers and berries may be collected for tea or made into tincture, which will provide the plant medicine person with a delicious medicine/food throughout the year.

The magnificent Coast Live Oak is also to be found near the creek. Oak bark and leaves provide us with an effective astringent tea. (Not tasty!) The twigs and leaves, simmered for 20 minutes, may be taken internally or applied directly to relieve bruises, varicosities, swollen tissues and bleeding.

As we look into the mirror of the creek we see the reflected image of numerous Red Alder trees (*Alnus* spp). The leaves and bark of Alder when made into a strong decoction provide an astringent, mildly heating wash for skin abrasions. A tea from the dried leaves may be taken (use plenty of honey!) to tonify the small intestinal lining to improve food absorption and fat metabolism.

Closer to the ground we find abundant Horsetail, Stinging Nettle and Himalayan Blackberry. The berries are producing countless white flowers in early summer—the promise of luscious fruit in July and August. They will scratch you fiercely if you're

not careful. For superb pies and jams, go for it. While you're about the business of collecting berries, an inadvertent encounter with stinging nettle may occur. There is a remedy close by in the form of Hedge Nettle. This plant often grows near its cousin and the juice of its lighter green, rounder leaves will knock off the pain of the stings.



Melinda Leithold. At left, Horsetail or Shavegrass.



Stinging Nettle can leave a reminder of your encounter for several hours, however it is said to be very good for arthritis. The Stinging Nettle gathered carefully—wear gloves and clip it into a grocery sized bag—cooked or fresh, makes a beautiful blue-green tea. It may be an acquired taste but it is delicious and extremely nutritious. Use it as you would spinach. Once the plant is

well dried or cooked the sting is gone.

Perhaps the most ubiquitous plant along this stretch of the creek is Horsetail, sometimes called Shavegrass. This is also a nutritious tea plant and should be gathered before its needle-like leaves fall to the horizontal. The Boy Scout Manual mentions it as a food similar to asparagus.

Plant medicine or herbal medicine is the way of prevention of disease and establishment of health. Plants of the riparian zones may be the unacknowledged medicine chests of the Tomales Bay watershed.

## Brock's Boathouse

(From front page)

The current owners are interested in preserving the building, but the deed restrictions so constrain the possible uses that the cost of improvements would be very difficult to ever recover if the property were sold and add immense complexity to the permitting process for current essential repairs. The intent of the IA/IF board members from nearly 40 years ago is unlikely to be met unless the deed restrictions are lifted.

In sum, in the Board's view, removing the deed restrictions is in the best interest of the IA/IF, the preservation of the building and the long-term interests of the current owners. Any changes to the building would be limited by its listing on a historical registry and the stringent design review process with the oversight of at least four agencies.

At its June meeting, the IA board will discuss recommending to the membership at the annual meeting on July 11 a vote to lift the deed restrictions and keep in place the guarantee of public access to the beach. The June meeting is Wednesday, June 24, 7 p.m. at the Gables, and the Board invites comments or coming to the meeting for those who are interested. We look forward to your views on the matter.

Inverness Association  
Post Office Box 382  
Inverness, California 94937  
[www.invernessassociation.org](http://www.invernessassociation.org)

Memberships  
Family \$45  
Individual \$30

# Summer Time in Inverness



Summer Solstice  
Hot Dog Feed &  
Potluck

**On Chicken Ranch Beach: June 20**  
**Put the Webers in a Circle!**  
**Quality Hot Dogs Courtesy of the IA**  
**4 p.m. into the evening.**  
**Everyone Welcome!**  
**(Night swimming on the incoming**  
**high tide.)**

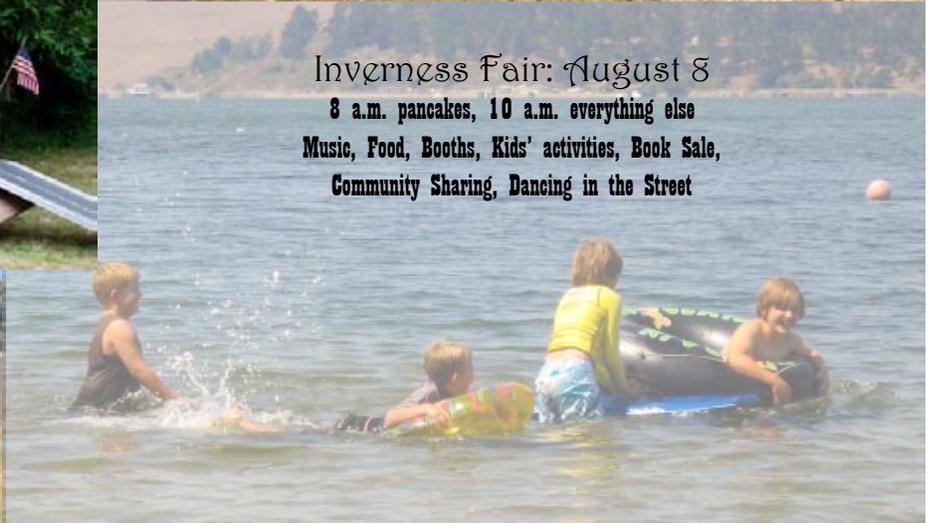


Fourth of July Races  
10 a.m. Firehouse Green

IA Annual Meeting: July 11  
7:30 p.m. Inverness Yacht Club  
Report on Chicken Ranch Restoration Project



Inverness Fair: August 8  
8 a.m. pancakes, 10 a.m. everything else  
Music, Food, Booths, Kids' activities, Book Sale,  
Community Sharing, Dancing in the Street



## IA Directors

**Jerry Abbott**, President  
669-1192  
jdabbott@horizoncable.com

**Lisa Doron**, Vice-president  
663-0339  
ldoron@svn.net

**Burton Eubank**, Secretary  
663-9241  
burton\_eubank@hotmail.com

**John Speh**, Treasurer  
663-8745  
johnspeh@alumni.ggu.edu.com

**Rebecca Dixon**  
669-1159  
rdixon@DixonMarineServices.com

**Stanley Gillmar**  
669-7765  
fogsalt@svn.net

**Julie Monson**  
663-9484  
juliemon@svn.net

**Jack Matthews**  
669-1249

**Michael Mery**  
663-1623  
mmery@horizoncable.com



Fire Chief Jim Fox, Fourth of July 2007

### *The Bagpiper*

*Editor:* Elizabeth Whitney  
*Photographer:* Elizabeth Fenwick  
*Design:* Dewey Livingston  
*Mailing:* Barry and Linda Linder

## IA Annual Meeting 7:30 p.m. July 11 at the Inverness Yacht Club

**Inverness Foundation**  
Post Office Box 382  
Inverness, California 94937

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### *The Bagpiper*

INVERNESS ASSOCIATION  
INVERNESS FOUNDATION

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)