



a view from the WEST POINT INN

The Newsletter for the West Point Inn Association and Friends

March 2017 • Issue 29

Mission Statement:
The West Point Inn Association exists to preserve, maintain, operate and educate the public about the significance of the historic West Point Inn.

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The newsletter is published with funds provided in memory of Lifetime Member, Ernest E. Emig, and Honorary Member, Harold Allen Atkinson.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bob Newcomer

Greetings everyone. I write this enjoying what has been a rare sunny day these past few months, but with the satisfaction of knowing that we will have ample water at the Inn this year, and beautiful water falls along the mountain's many trails from now until late Spring. Other bright spots for me looking forward are the solid financial status of the Inn; and the capable Board, innkeepers, committee chairs, and reservationist I have the honor of working with this year. Since December, we have been developing a strategic plan and budget for 2017. The most visible of these endeavors will be the completion of the 'history making' Emig Cabin for which construction started last Fall. The cabin is named for **Ernest E. Emig**, a former WPIA member and the benefactor. Complementing the cabin will be a series of improvements within the Inn to bring this historic structure into compliance with the Americans for Disability Act (ADA) accessibility regulations. Among the many improvements will be a long sought modification of the Inn's deck and the installation of a ramp from behind the innkeeper's quarters to the deck to create a second access pathway to the deck for persons with a disability. Buttressing our Fire & Safety programs is another high priority. A key project there is installing a generator powered Booster Pump for the Sprinkler & Fire Hose lines. Creature comforts for the Inn's guests are getting attention too. In this case, continuing a scheduled replacement of mattresses, and bed linens. The Inn's website and reservations system will also be getting some refinements to make it more visually interesting, and in the case of reservations to give us better reporting of how the Inn is being used. The MMWD, our landlord, is particularly interested in learning how often the public vs. WPIA members use the Inn.

This Winter's rain and cold weather re-educated us to the need to pay close attention to periodic chimney sweeping, and servicing of our propane generators. In particular, the extended number of cloudy days lowered the efficiency of our solar panels, and placed a heavy burden on the generator. In spite of the many challenges, our Innkeepers kept the Inn functioning and comfortable for our guests.

We have been accumulating financial reserves these past few years to help fund these many projects, but we will continue to rely on the efficient operation of the Inn, effective reservations, and our amazing work parties.

One last priority to highlight is Succession planning. For us this means mentoring members into roles on our committees and the board. I am urging each of you to be active in one or more of committees, and Special Events, and to continue participating in the Work Parties. All of this helps build a sense of community that all members share, and assures that we have continuing leadership for the Inn.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Gordy and Lynn MacDermott

A big thanks to all members who renewed their memberships in the West Point Inn.

Here are our most recent new members:

Terri Saul & Josh Michels of Berkeley
Sarah McBride of San Francisco
Leslie Bell & Alex Gronke of Oakland
Jon Gauthier & Susan Lofthus of Stockton
Debra Schwartz & William Migely of Mill Valley
Ian Patrick Sobieski of Sausalito
Michelle Slade of Corte Madera
Steve Wilbur of San Rafael
Johanna & Jim La Fleur of San Rafael
Inge Ivens of Sausalito
Emilia Patrick & Aaron Apperson of San Francisco

The following new members have shared some information about themselves:

Leslie Bell and Alex Gronke wrote: We've been coming to the West Point Inn as guests for the past 15 years, and over the past two years have deepened our involvement as our two daughters (Vivian age 11 and Gloria age 7) have grown old enough to volunteer at work parties and pancake breakfasts. Leslie works as a psychotherapist in Berkeley, and Alex works in advertising in San Francisco. We love hiking, travel, and being outdoors in general.

Sarah McBride wrote: I'm a five-year resident of the Bay Area, after stints in Los Angeles, Washington DC, Hong Kong, Kuwait, Britain, and various other spots. My hobbies include hiking (I have a mysterious talent for acquiring hiking boots that disintegrate mid trek), reading, and croissant research. I'm a journalist, currently covering technology.

Debra Schwartz & William Migely wrote: We are long-time residents of Mill Valley and lovers of nature, history and culture. Love to hike and bike. Both are members of the Mill Valley Historical Society and Clean MV (Anti-litter group). Debra is on the board of the Mill Valley Historical Society, in charge of the First Wed. Speaker Series and Oral History Program.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

HELP WITH WPI COMMITTEES

Jan Gauthier

Consider volunteering on one of our many committees. Below is a list and a brief summary of purpose for each committee. If you would like to help or contribute in any way let us know. Each chair's email is on the last page of this newsletter. You may also contact: Jan Gauthier jangauthier08@gmail.com.

Building & Grounds: Brenda Roberts

- Construction projects large and small

Communications Committee: Jan Gauthier

- Coordinate the website, newsletter, and emails.

Election Committee: Chris Marcuse

- Supervise elections following the bylaws of the WPIA

Fire & Safety: Pete Martin

- Monitor general safety of the Inn

Garden Committee: Kathleen Kopp

- Maintain and beautify the garden

Housekeeping: Fran Rondeau

- Purchase supplies, sew, repair, replace Inn items as needed

Membership: Gordy MacDermott

- Maintain roster, process applications, send notices, collect dues

Newsletter: Alison Bricker

- Work with newsletter editor as needed, some clerical duties

Pancake Breakfast: Lin Marcuse

- Manage PCB calendar, supplies, organize primary and cleanup hosts

Personnel: Lin Marcuse

- Meet with innkeepers

Policy & Procedures: Wayne Koide

- Maintain Policy manuals. Bylaws and Reservation policies

Work Parties: Jennifer Barclay

- Organize and manage WP third Saturday of every month



Progress on ADA Cabin

WORK PARTY REPORT

Jennifer Barclay

A Girl Who Likes to Get Dirty

I've been coming to the work parties since I decided to become a member in 2006. Never stopped, and, I've never witnessed such a girl. Of course she isn't a girl but, a pretty slender woman (40ish), girl-in-spirit, with lots of enthusiasm and energy. Her name is Sara Lanham and is working on becoming a member. She's come up the last 3 work parties, October, November and January and, those work parties it's been raining and she's always chosen a chore that's outside and in the rain. And, always came in after the work party wet to the core, dirty from the top of her head to the tip of her toes AND with a great big smile.

If only I had the power, she would have been approved to become a member immediately!

We Need You

We have a head count of approximately 600 members and most likely about 300 have real legitimate reasons for not volunteering. With that being said, I'd really like to see those members who are capable and able, who get the great discounts in staying the night, to show up and volunteer for some of our events.

West Point Inn is a volunteer, non profit organization and is only as good as your involvement. Please make a commitment to volunteer for one of our events in 2017. We're going to burn out the members who are always up there and, I need chefs and assistant leaders for the work parties.

Come have fun with your West Point Inn family.
I guarantee a fun and lovely time.

Your loyal Work Party Chair, Jennifer Barclay

HEAL THE HEARTH CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Suzie Koide

We had a fundraising campaign to help restore the fireplace in the member's lounge. We raised \$12,500. We would like to thank the following members:

Alan Frankel, Alan Cascio, Alec Dinto, Alison Bricker, Amy Lindburg, Andrew Lowry, Karen Parko, Andrew Winkler, Barbara Voisin, Blaise Cullen, Bob and Nancy Hines, Bob Newcomer, Bonnie Jones, Carleigh McDonald, Carol Svetcov, Celeste Binnings, Chris and Bonnie Mumford, Cindy Shaw, Clifton Schoolroy, Diane Kallet, Eileen Sullivan, Elizabeth Dietrich, Fran Rondeau, Frances Sullivan, Gary Wren, George DeBruin, George Lazarus, George Reid, Gerald Cahill and Kathleen King, Gordy MacDermott, Howard Raff, Marcia Nay, James Parton, Janet Walker, Jean Loo, Thomas Dawson, Jed Smith, Jennifer McWilliams, Joanne Deveraux, Joe Ludi Estate, Johanna Sitek, Julie Howell, Karen McClure, Kate Rowan, Katarine Ballinger, Kathleen Kopp, Larry and Betty Henry, Linda and Steve Hulley, Lois and Melvin Tukman, Malcolm and MaryAnn Dunlap, Marcus Byruck, Marcy Pat-
tinson, Marilyn and Richard Skaff, Mark Northcross, Mary and Scott Chapman, McCoy Dodsworth, Megan Agosto, Michael Stephens, Mitch Brown, Nathaniel Lee, Ole Prahm, Olene Sparks, Patti Schmidt, Paul Ravensway, Pete Martin, Pierre Terrier, Quintin McMahon, Richard Huston, Richard Merron, Robert and Rosemarie Thomson, Robert Emrich, Robert McChaud, Robert Siegel, Ruby Unger, Sandy Stadfel, Deborah Franklin, SB Chapman, Scott Halsted, Seela Lewis, Stella Dennig, Stephen Corrazzo, Susan Arthur, Tim and Starleen Wood Foundation, Tobey Martin, Vivian Berliner, Wayne Koide, Zachary Townsend, and Zepporah Glass.

We are grateful for people who donated by mail and on-line. If I missed someone, please let me know and we will be sure to acknowledge you in the next newsletter.

Thank you again for your generosity to our beloved Inn.

Development Team

Susan Koide, Olene Toby Sparks and Patti Schmidt

PERSONNEL NOTES

Lin Marcuse

We want to thank our great group of Innkeepers for keeping the Inn looking so spectacular! We also want to welcome our newest IK, **PETER GRAZIER**. He is an avid hiker and biker who has also worked at the Mt. Tam Visitor's Center. Besides his knowledge of the mountain, Peter has experience on railroads, civil engineering and management consulting/team building. An eclectic background that we feel meshes well with the Inn community. So, next time you are up at the Inn, please give a hearty welcome to Peter!

GARDEN OF EATIN'

Kathleen Kopp

Greetings garden lovers.

We are gearing up for a great crop of veggies this summer. Would appreciate help at the March 18th work party to prep the garden for planting and nestle our first seedlings into the moistened earth.

So happy we have had all this rainfall to nourish our garden paradise. Thank you Mother Nature and all who help nurture our garden.



Trillium on Steep Ravine Trail



Steep Ravine Trail

PANCAKE BREAKFASTS

Gordy MacDermott & Lin Marcuse

That time of year is fast approaching. Yes, it's time for pancakes on the mountain! We want to thank everyone who steps up to help with this major fundraiser for the Inn. This year we have some new hosts who are going to mentor with some of our more experienced members. If you are interested in working on a breakfast or clean-up crew, please contact us at pancakes@westpointinn.com and let us know the date(s) you are available. We will forward your contact info to the host(s) for that event and let them know your wish to assist. We are also looking for help in distributing posters to bike, coffee and outdoor shops throughout the Bay Area. So, if you would be willing to drive around and ask managers to display our posters, please also contact us. The distribution will take place in late March to early April.

Our 2017 dates and hosts are:

May 14 (Mother's Day)

Breakfast: Scott & Lisa Halsted and Gordy MacDermott
Clean-up: TBD

June 18 (Father's Day)

Breakfast: Mark & Antoinetta Northcross
Clean-up: TBD

July 9

Breakfast: Fran Rondeau & Gordy MacDermott
Clean-up: TBD

August 13

Breakfast: Jan Gauthier & Wade Hufford
Clean-up: Bonnie Jones

September 10

Breakfast: Bob Newcomer & Gordy MacDermott
Clean-up: Rose Sullivan

October 8

Breakfast: Pat Kavanaugh
Clean-up: Lin & Chris Marcuse

ON FIRE! ANNUAL CHILI COOK OFF

Kathy Kopp

AMAZING ALMOST ANNUAL CHILI COOK OFF

Want to come have fun and eat amazing chili with members, friends and family?

When:

Sunday, March 19th. 1PM to 5PM at the West Point Inn.

Menu:

5 Delicious chilis

3 Home baked cornbreads (one made by Fran)

Homemade coleslaw

Fresh brownies

This is a bring your own beverage event. Plenty of fresh mountain spring water will be provided.

Cost: \$10 per person

Hosted by: Kathy Kopp and Gail Shahan

We are still looking for one more chili chef. Let us know if interested ASAP.

Please contact katkopp@gmail.com if interested in cooking up some chili, or if you have any questions.

RSVP via Eventbrite by March 12th:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/amazing-almost-annual-chili-cook-off-tickets-32246664642>



TANGO RETURNS TO THE INN

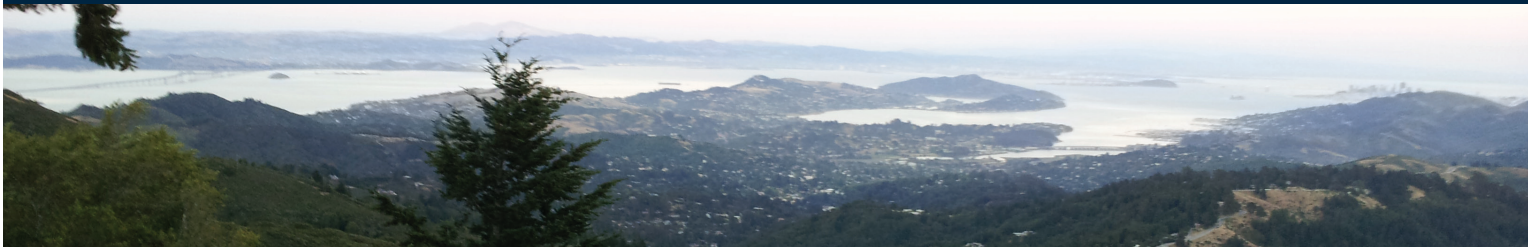
Mark Northcross

Would you like to learn and dance the Argentine tango to a live music at our favorite inn? Antoinetta and Mark are doing the Tango on the Mountain fundraiser for the Inn on the evening of Saturday, April 29th. Bay Area tango teachers Jonathan Yamauchi and Olivia Levitt will teach a beginner's class Saturday evening. The Redwood Tango trio will play live tango music after dinner for dancing in the Member's Lounge. In addition, we have a small collection of old 78 rpm tango records to play on the Inn's Victrola between live sets. Antoinetta will prepare dinner for us all on Saturday night and breakfast Sunday morning.

Please email Mark at mark@nhaadvisors.com or call Mark at 415 380 9746 if your are interested in attending. Mark should have the costs figured out by the time you see this in the newsletter.



Cataract Falls



VIEW FROM THE PORCH: RUTH DOWNING

Marilyn Skaff



Ruth Downing was born in Montana (Big Sky Country) and grew up loving the out of doors and appreciating panoramic views. When she went to college at the University of Washington in Seattle, she was able to pursue her love of the outdoors with hikes on Mt. Rainer and skiing. She met her husband there, a young “woodsman” from Oregon who also appreciated nature and hiking. They married and moved first to Portland and then to San Francisco in 1960.

After they settled in the Bay Area, Ruth and her husband pursued their love of hiking on Mount Tamalpais with their two children. She recalls passing by the West Point Inn, but knew little about it. She had never been inside until she was invited to go to the Inn by her friend, Katy Martin, in the early 70's. It didn't take long for her to fall in love with the place. She became part of a group of women who would hike up on a weekday afternoon, share dinner on the deck, watch the full moon rise, then hike down the fire road in the moonlight. Her happy memories of the Inn also include hosting New Year's Eve parties, participating in the many celebrations that took place at the Inn, and mornings on the deck watching the sun come up. She served on the board and was a frequent participant at work parties. For her, the work parties provided both a sense of accomplishment and companionship.

Although Mill Valley has been her home for many years, Ruth's life has also included periods of living abroad. Her husband's work took them to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) for 5 years. Ruth reported that it was a wonderful 5 years. She and her family explored the beauty and culture of the sub-continent that included yearly hikes in the Himalayas. She enrolled in Dacca University, working on a MA degree in Islamic History and Culture and became a volunteer and then staff member in the first Peace Corps program in Asia. She has marvelous memories of Bangladesh.

Back in the Bay Area, Ruth pursued a master's degree in Psychology at San Francisco State University. After the death of her husband in 1975, Ruth applied for a job at the new Indian Valley College and was hired as Dean of Student Services. She later joined the faculty at College of Marin in the Counseling Department where she taught and counseled students until her retirement. During her tenure at COM, she took a sabbatical and spent a year at the Jung Institute in Zurich – with plenty of opportunity to pursue her love of hiking.

To Ruth, the Inn represents the good feeling of saving something important, along with the joy and luxury of having a beautiful place to go. She expressed strong appreciation for the hard work by the board and members in the maintenance of the Inn. She continues her lifelong passion for the out of doors, as well as involvement in politics and environmental issues.

DEPARTURES



LEWIS BATTLEMAN

October 5, 1947 - September 12, 2016

Lewis Battleman, Lifetime member since 1996, passed away peacefully under Hospice Care at home on Whidbey Island, Washington, from Bulbar onset ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease), only ten weeks after diagnosis, one year from onset of symptoms. He is survived by his wife, Kate Rowan, Lifetime Member who introduced him to the West Point Inn.

Lewis and Kate were actively involved with WPI events and duties while in the Bay Area. They often hosted when nobody else was willing to do so. For years, they were known for their cooking talents at the annual New Years Eve Celebration. Long after everyone else was asleep Lewis would rise, quietly sneak to the kitchen to give it an extra thorough cleaning and prepare the area for New Years Day breakfast. His speciality was roasted coffee and he dubbed himself the "Prince of Coffee".

At one time, Lewis volunteered to handle reservations when nobody else would and he loved doing it. He would tell folks to not be surprised if accommodations weren't five star beds rather, they might be lucky to get a haybale to sleep on then he'd ask if they wanted a single or double haybale. He never received complaints about accommodation comfort.

Lewis and Kate eventually moved to Whidbey Island where they lived the past ten years. He was a volunteer for the South Whidbey Senior Center. He loved experiencing rural life. Kate now finds comfort with the dog Lewis adored, a Brittany named Suzie Ruby, seen with him in the photograph.

Respectfully submitted by Olene Sparks-Toby



PHYLLIS TOBY McKAY

A WPIA member since 1967, Phyllis died peacefully in her sleep, January 30, 2017, at the age of 86. She was born, raised and educated in San Francisco. She graduated from Lowell High School and San Francisco State, taught second grade in the San Francisco school district for 40 years and was proud of the fact that she taught over a thousand children to read. She is seen in the photo with husband, Ed McKay, also a WPIA member who died in 1995. Phyllis and Ed had two children, Brent and Lisa, and three grandchildren, Alix, Drew and Scott.

Phyllis was a teenager when she first visited the WPI with her uncles, Les, Dan and Fred Toby, WPIA members who were instrumental in keeping the Inn from being demolished in the 1940's. Her brother, Ed Toby, served as WPIA President in the early 1980's. He died in 1991. Her sisters, Elizabeth Sagehorn and Susan Evans are long time members. Members of the extended Toby family date from the 1940's to present.

In the early 60's she and her husband began volunteering to host at the Inn. At that time the Innkeeper had weekends off and members filled in to tend to lodgers and visitors. Sometimes hikers arrived at the crack of dawn seeking lemonade. From 1976 to 1989, Phyllis arranged an annual gathering at the Inn of women friends who spent a week in June playing bridge, singing songs and having fun. The group was known as "The Girls With Grandmother Faces".

Lovingly submitted by sister-in-law, Olene Sparks-Toby



HERITAGE NIGHT 2017

MAY 5TH OR 6TH

Fred Runner

Heritage Night 2017 May 5 or 6, 2017 A Gift to America

In 1908, a few of “do-gooder” Republicans created Muir Woods National Monument. They were President Teddy Roosevelt and two residents of Marin county William and Elizabeth Kent. It was the Kents’ first gift to America.

The Kents had saved the last stand of virgin redwoods growing near a major city. All three had kept the canyon from becoming a reservoir. Muir Woods was the first National Monument given to America by citizens. It was the beginning of William Kent’s altruistic quest to preserve the wilderness on and around Mt. Tamalpais and it helped lead to the successful creation of the National Park Service. It’s a story of eloquence, frustration and generosity.

On May 5 and 6, come to the West Point Inn and celebrate the Kent’s gift to the future and the creation of Muir Woods. Enjoy dinner and a glass of wine. Hear about Kent’s years of hard and inspired work, binging congressmen to Mt. Tamalpais and Muir Woods to sell the idea of a National Park system and much more. Reservations are necessary.

A reservation includes dinner, wine and the show for \$35 per person. Chef Fran Rondeau is planning an Americana-themed menu. This is a fundraiser for the old Inn. Please make your dinner reservation on line on the Inn’s website, www.WestPointInn.com

Regrettably, all guest rooms at the Inn are booked.

A group will hike back to Pan Toll following the Heritage Night presentation about 9 PM. A twilight sky and half moon will help light the way but please bring a flashlight.

Heritage Night Schedule (both nights): West Point Inn open all day
Appetizers: 5:30 pm
Dinner: 6:00 pm
Show: 7:30 pm
Hikers Depart: 9 pm

Special Heritage Weekend Dedication on May 6

At 3 PM, Saturday May 6, the Native Sons of the Golden West will dedicate a new plaque at the West Point Inn. A special ceremony will recognize both the landmark Inn and its listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Native Sons have adorned many California landmarks with their plaques. Each plaque has a brief history of that site. During the ceremony Native Sons members will mix mortar to mount the plaque using sand from California’s beaches and water from California’s rivers and for this event, water from the West Point Inn’s own spring.

The short ceremony in front of the Inn should last about a half hour.

Please make your dinner reservation on on line on the Inn’s website at www.westpointinn.com or directly at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/west-point-inn-heritage-night-dinners-saving-the-tamalpais-wilderness-a-story-of-eloquence-tickets-31589443877>

**WEST POINT INN
OLD TIMERS' APPRECIATION PARTY
Saturday, June 3rd, 2017**



3:30 – 5:00 DRINKS AND SOCIALIZING
5:00 DINNER
6:00 STORY TELLING & MEMORY SHARING

LIVE BLUEGRASS MUSIC

RSVP Required by Wednesday, May 24

Dinner reservations: contact Marilyn Skaff at 415.713.5259 or marilynskaff@gmail.com
Overnight lodging: Contact Olene Sparks-Toby at 510.236.8293 or email olenes@aol.com

All members are welcome, but preference for overnight lodging will be given to Old Timers (20+ years as members). Newer members can contact Olene Sparks-Toby on or after May 24th to inquire about overnight availability.

Questions or requests for transportation: contact Marilyn Skaff
Cancellation of event: Rain or Red Flag Alert (Fire Danger)
Permission to hike out after dark
Updates: Contact Innkeeper (415) 388-9955

NOTE: PARTICIPATION LIMITED TO 50 PEOPLE

2017 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

March

- 13 Board Meeting**
- 18 Work Party
- 19 Chili bake-off - *Host: Kathleen Kopp & Gail Shahan*

April

- 10 Board meeting*
- 15 Work Party
- 22 Night before Spring Meeting
- 23 Spring Meeting & Members barbecue
Host: Fran Rondeau
- 29 Tango Night - *Host: Mark Northcross*

May

- 5/6 Heritage Night++
Host Fred Runner
- 8 Board Meeting**
- 14 Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast
Hosts: Scott and Lisa Halsted & Gordy MacDermott
- 20 Work Party

June

- 3 Old Timers Appreciation Party
Host: Marilyn Skaff
- 12 Board Meeting**
- 17 Work Party
- 18 Father's Day Pancake Breakfast
Hosts: Mark and Antonietta Northcross

July

- 9 Pancake Breakfast
Hosts: Fran Rondeau and Gordy McDermott
- 10 Board Meeting**
- 15 Work Party

August

- 13 Pancake Breakfast
Hosts: Jan Gauthier and Wade Hufford
- 14 Board Meeting**
- 19 Work Party

September

- 10 Pancake Breakfast
Hosts: Bob Newcomer & Gordy MacDermott
- 11 Board Meeting**
- 16 Work Party

October

- 8 Final Pancake Breakfast
Host: Pat Kavanagh
- 9 Board Meeting**
- 14 Night Before Fall Meeting
- 15 Fall Meeting & Member's barbecue
- 21 Work Party

November

- 13 Board Meeting**
- 18 Work Party

December

- 9 Cookie Party/ Member's Holiday Party++
- 11 Board & Committee Chairs Christmas party
- 31 New Year's Eve Party
Host: Olene Sparks-Toby

* Location at MMWD Boardroom
220 Nellen Drive, Corte Madera
MEETINGS START AT 7PM

++ Walk-out nights

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Mill Valley, CA 94941

The West Point Inn Association exists to preserve, maintain, operate and educate the public about the significance of the historic West Point Inn.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR EMAIL?

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO

BY SENDING AN EMAIL TO:

MEMBERUPDATE@WESTPOINTINN.COM

WANT TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE?

PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS

AND PHOTOS TO

EDITOR@WESTPOINTINN.COM