

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR



ONE TO REMEMBER...

It was another one of those fantastic magical nights at the Gualala Arts Center on Thursday March 8, 2012.

"The Kashaya Band of Pomo People and the Russian People have come together once more for a memorable evening of sharing. In January, the Kashaya offered the Opening Blessing for the Fort Ross Bicentennial Commemoration. On that occasion the Russians, for the first time, recognized the Kashaya People as the First People of the land. This was an historic moment for Fort Ross, for Kashaya, and for the Russians, as well as those who surround this history today, including the California State Parks.

The Dinner at Six was another historic moment as the Kashaya and Russians sat together to share a meal of different foods representing their peoples. Violet Parrish Chappell offered a prayer in native language, one that we will never forget. One person asked what she said, and she simply said, "I was praying to my creator."

Vice Consul Andre Lenev gave a heartwarming reminder that Russians are truly only a part of this vital time - coming together with the Kashaya. The entire evening was full of lively energy with bread and salt as a welcoming tradition by Russians and Kashaya, each person also being offered a name of an individual who once lived at Colony Ross or the surrounding areas. A slideshow was ongoing to bring the highlights of Fort Ross into the evening. One participant commented, "this is the best borsch I have ever had." The wild pig meat was cooked to



David Susalla, Robin Joy Wellman, Fort Ross Bicentennial Co-chair, Martina Parrish, Violet Parrish Chappell, Kashaya Band Elder, Russian Vice Consul General Andre Lenev and Mrs. Tatiana Lenev, Vivian Parrish Wilder, Fort Ross Volunteers

perfection. Seaweed was a first for many, as well as homemade butter, made right on the spot by Harmony churning away with any who would join her.

Speeches were made, and stories were shared. Fort Ross State Historic Park would like to thank Gualala Arts Center, and in particular the Dinner at Six coordinators, Ben and Wilma Klagenberg, for their support of this event, including the team they provided, and all the food. History was shared this evening, and we look forward to more moments on our coast."

Robin Joy - State Park Interpreter I
Fort Ross 2012 Bicentennial Co-Chair
Fort Ross State Historic Park

It is moments like this that make it all worthwhile for me personally. I am honored to play a small role in creating history and making a difference by sharing cultures through the arts.

Thanks go out to all who volunteered, cooked, attended, and especially Robin Joy Wellman, who all worked so hard to make this night one to remember.

Sus

David 'Sus' Susalla
Executive Director
Gualala Arts, Inc.