

Mendocino Heritage

Explore some of the historical sites in Mendocino County while learning about the county's rich history.

Mendocino County Museum and Roots of Motive Power, Willits

The County Museum houses in excess of 100,000 artifacts, including local Pomo Indian basketry, 19th & 20th century domestic, mercantile, and business exhibits, and maritime history as represented by artifacts of the Frolic, a brig that sank off the Mendocino coast in 1850. There is also an exhibit on Seabiscuit and Ridgewood Ranch and an alternatelifestyle (1960's - 70's) display. Within the Museum's buildings and grounds, Roots of Motive Power exhibits steam engines and railroad equipment used in early logging days, with live action demonstrations four times per year. Open Wednesday - Sunday.

Grace Hudson Museum and The Sun House, Ukiah

This art, history, and anthropology museum focuses on the lifeworks of artist Grace Carpenter Hudson and her husband, ethnographer Dr. John Hudson. Changer interdisciplinary exhibits and public programs feature Western American art, California Pomo Indian cultures, histories of California's diverse North Coast region, and the work of contemporary regional artists. The Sun House (California Historical Landmark No. 926), the Hudsons' 1911 redwood Craftsman bungalow is a National Trust for Historic Preservation Associate Site, open for docent-led tours between noon and 3:00pm. Open Wednesday - Sunday.

Anderson Valley Historical Museum, Boonville

About one mile north of Boonville, the Anderson Valley Historical Museum consists of the one-room Con Creek School (1891) and three added structures, including a model sheep shearing shed. Exhibits represent aspects of Valley home life, schools, agriculture and lumbering, with some special attention to "Boontling," the Valley's unique folk language. All artifacts displayed, including the exhibit of Pomo Indian basketry and stone tools, have been found or used in Anderson Valley. Open Friday - Sunday, closed December and January.

Point Cabrillo Lighthouse, Mendocino

On the windswept bluffs of the 300 acre nature preserve, the Point Cabrillo Light Station (1909), with it's operating 3rd Order Fresnel lens, is one of the very few intact stations remaining on the west coast. Exhibits feature the area's maritime history, including a display of artifacts from the wreck of the Frolic, the Gold Rush era vessel that changed the north coast forever. Learn a little intertidal ecology at the Preserve's mini marine science center and saltwater aquarium, located in the historic blacksmith shop. The Lighthouse Gift Shop features collectibles and the work of local artists and photographers. Open April - October, Friday through Monday; Saturdays and Sundays in March.

Point Arena Lighthouse and Museum, Pt. Arena

One of the tallest lighthouses in California, the historic 115 foot tall Point Arena Lighthouse (1908) and the nearby Fog Signal Building (1869) are open to the public for guided tours. Visitors can climb to the top of the light as keepers have done for over 100 years. Located at the tip of a narrow peninsula, the Point Arena Lighthouse is one of the best places to view migrating whales, endangered bird species, and rare coastal wildflowers. Open daily, year round.