



Marin history: A favorite county for camping

Courtesy of Marin History Museum

The John and Louisa Kraeger family campsite located along the San Anselmo Creek, circa 1901.

By [Scott Fletcher](#) | Marin History Museum

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Marin's camping

Camping seems to have changed over the years. In the late 19th and early 20th century, Marin was a favorite location for families escaping the cold and fog of cities around the bay.

There were numerous sites along the creeks of the Ross and San Geronimo valleys that catered not only to weekend visitors, but also to campers who would spend weeks, even months, enjoying the sunshine and pastoral pleasures of Marin. This 1901 photograph is of the John and Louisa Kraeger family campsite along San Anselmo Creek.

John Kraeger emigrated from Germany as a child in 1878 and Louisa in 1896 at age 21. They were married in 1896 and raised a family in San Francisco that included daughter Freda and son Alfred. More than likely, Freda is one of the infants being held in the photograph, as she was less than a year old when the image was taken.

The campsite is well stocked with a wood burning stove, cooking pots and pans, and an open-air pantry for storing food, wine and dishes. The professionally lettered sign reading "Camp Leisure" suggests that the site was visited often over the years and for extended periods of time.

At the time this photograph was taken the Kraegers lived on 16th Street near Church Street, moving eventually to Hill Street in Noe Valley. John died in July 1942 and Louisa in January 1967, two weeks after her 92nd birthday, no doubt cherishing the memories of summers spent with family and friends in the wild woodlands of Ross Valley.