Bill Schupp was born in Saginaw, Michigan, and ran away from home at the age of thirteen. He spent most of his life working in a large insurance firm in Toronto, Canada. This firm, the Insurance and Vessel Company, Ltd., was connected with the North Pacific Sea Products Co., a whaling company that operated on the Pacific Coast.

When he was in his sixties, Bill apparently decided that he wanted to try something different. Between 1915 and 1917, he purchased both the North Pacific Sea Products Company and the American Pacific Whaling Company. At that time, North Pacific Sea Products was based out of Akutan Island, Alaska, and American Pacific headquarters was in Bay City, Washington (on Grays Harbor). Bill left the insurance firm and moved back to the United States in 1917 to pursue his new vocation.

"Change Over Time: The Lowering of Lake Washington" was developed by Eastside Heritage Center in collaboration with the Bellevue School District.
Shoreline Map:
Meydenbauer Bay


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## Map Key

### EXPLANATION

**Symbols for historical map** | **Features** | **Symbols for present-day map** | **Remarks**
--- | --- | --- | ---
| | Shoreline | | Corresponds to the line of mean high water level (saltwater) or mean lake level.
| Mean lower low-water line (not shown) | Streams | | The historical mapping made no distinction between intermittent and perennial streams. Streams indexed with solid, inverted triangles are historical channels that have been filled, diverted to sewers, or significantly modified. Open triangles indicate historical streams that today enter the lakes or bays in a near-natural state.
| | Wetland | | The historical wetlands were freshwater marsh except in Salmon Bay, where salt and brackish marsh existed.
| | Forested upland (not shown) | | The historical forest vegetation was predominantly a mixture of Douglas fir, western red cedar, and western hemlock.
| | Grassland (not shown) | | The historical grasslands included land that was logged prior to the surveys but not then developed for agricultural or urban use.
| | Agricultural land (not shown) | | Limits of land cleared for agricultural use. The polygons represent plots of different ownership or fields for different crops.
| | Urban land (now shown as streets, buildings, or structures) | | 
| | Shoreline structures | | Piers, wharves, warehouses, and mills extending from the shoreline.
| | Solid-waste disposal sites (not shown) | | Sites of filled or modified land where the filling has included general waste and demolition waste (Sources: Wilson, 1975; Phelps, 1978, p. 206).
Pacific Whaling Industry

The Pacific deep-sea whaling fleet is no more. The few that still remain in seaworthy condition of the score or more staunch vessels which, up to a few years ago, made annual trips into the Arctic and the Pacific oceans for oil and bone, are being or have already been dispersed into other lines of usefulness, with alterations in rig and internal arrangement that would make them almost unrecognizable to their former owners.

For many years San Francisco was the headquarters for the Pacific fleet, and the industry died a lingering death, the end virtually coming with the loss of the Gay Head in Chichagof bay, Alaska, on June 27, 1914. Since that time the fleet has lain in the mud of Oakland creek, with the owners partitioning a chance to sell at any kind of a fair price, and no buyers, or very few. A few of the old boats were taken out from time to time and fitted up for trading or other uses, but most of them remained neglected until the shortage of ships, resulting from the war, caused a demand for practically anything that would float. This year the steamer Herman, owned by H. Libeau & Co., was chartered to Capt. L. A. Pedersen, well known in the whaling industry. Before sailing her engines were removed and an Atlas gas engine installed as the motive power. She left San Francisco early in the year, and while her trip was principally a trading one to Alaska, she did some whaling and secured about 7,000 lbs. of whalebone and 7,250 gallons of whale oil. She returned to San Francisco on Nov. 14.

The auxiliary whaling schooner, purchased, called from Seattle in the spring and spent the season trading and hunting whales and walrus. She captured several whales and 85 walrus.

Shore Whaling.

Most of the whaling of the world is being carried on from what are termed “shore stations.” These are plants erected at places convenient to the shore whaling grounds, although in some instances large steamers are fitted up with the necessary machinery for the handling of the catch, and are moved from place to place. There were three companies engaged in shore whaling on the Pacific coast during 1915, viz: North Pacific Sea Products company, with station at Akutan Island, Alaska; United States Whaling company, with station at Port Armstrong, Alaska; Victoria Whaling company, with stations at Kuskokwak, Naknek harbor and Rose harbor, in British Columbia, and the American Pacific Whaling company, with station at Bay City, Wash.

The whales sought by the shore whalers are those which have generally been avoided by the deep-sea whalers, due, largely, to the smallness of the baleen, and to the greater pennenity of the animals. On this coast these three species are generally
Seattle as a Center for Fisheries and Allied Industries

The advantages the Puget Sound country has to offer the fisheries and allied industries have become pretty well known, especially since Seattle has become the supply and distributing center for the North Pacific and Alaska fishing interests. That all the advantages here enumerated for fishery industries will be greatly increased by the opening of the Lake Washington Canal is now well known by all who have been brought to this point by the means of the Puget Sound Canal, in particular.

PUGET SOUND.

The Puget Sound system of protected roadsteads, bays and inlets, with a total shoreline of something like two thousand miles, as might be expected, contains a great number of sites suitable for various industries and many sheltered coves, particularly favorable as locations for fishery headquarters. Such sites may be found all the way between Bellingham and Olympia, a distance of 156 miles.

There are distinct advantages, however, in the location near the population and transportation center, which leads to the consideration of the Seattle district.

Seattle District.

The situation in and about Seattle may be readily appreciated by reference to the accompanying map, a glance at which will make clear how the naturally available water front is being greatly added to by the construction of the new steel shipyard and ship repair yards, and particularly the Lake Washington Canal.

Lake Washington Canal: The Canal, which will be of which will be ready to accommodate any large vessels, is to be built from the navigation, from Puget Sound, both Salmon Bay and Lake Union. The following year, Lake Washington will be lowered to the level of Lake Union, and the entire fresh water-waterway, with ample storage, will become available. There are two locks, the large one being the deepest, with a lift of 25 feet over the sill. The smaller lock, designed for floating bulk and small vessels, is 300 feet by 140 feet and very near to open in April.

By its position, Lake Union is the finest harbor for fishing boat facilities.

Seattle, with its excellent facilities, will be the center of the fisheries of the great Puget Sound, and will be the most important center in the United States for the processing and marketing of all kinds of fish and seafoods. The city will become a great trading center for the exchange of fish and seafood products with other countries.

By PAUL P. WHITHAM.

The advantages of Seattle have attracted many industries to the city, and it has become a center for fisheries and allied industries. The city has excellent facilities, including a large number of vessels for fishing, processing, and marketing fish products. The city is well located for the exchange of fish and seafood products with other countries.

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Lake Washington Canal: The Canal locks, the use of which will be free, are to be put into service in July next, opening to navigation, from Puget Sound, both Salmon Bay and Lake Union. The following year, Lake Washington will be lowered to the level of Lake Union, and the entire inner fresh-water harbor, with approximately 100 miles of shoreland, will become available. There are two locks, the large one being 80 feet wide by 825 feet in length, with 35 feet of water over the sill. The smaller lock, designed for fishing boats, yachts and small steamers, is 30x150 feet and very quick in operation.

The Salmon Bay and Lake Union basins offer exceptionally quiet anchorage and are well served by transportation lines; in fact, Lake Union is practically in the heart of the city. At Salmon Bay is located the winter headquarters for fishing power boats.

About Lake Washington are numerous sites for fisheries headquarters, where extensive grounds and anchorage may be had for the storing of tackle, laying up of vessels, the installation of repair shops, warehouses, and any other needed facilities. The inner harbor being free from teredo and other wood-borers, the construction and maintenance of wharves and docks thereon, is comparatively inexpensive. Such places as Juanita Bay, Yarrow Bay, Pontiac, Mercer Slough, Rainier Beach, and the north and south ends of the lake, all shown on the map, are especially desirable situations for fisheries headquarters during the “lay-up” and outfitting season.

It has occurred to me that, probably because it was so much a part of my life, I left out what was probably the biggest industry in Bellevue at the time. My grandfather's company, The American Pacific Whaling Company. It was based in Bellevue with the main office and machine shop on the site of the present Meydenbauer Bay Marina. He moved the ships into Lake Washington in 1919 and built the dock shortly after the locks were completed. I guess I got the cart a bit before the horse here. I should say he built the pier in 1919 and then moved the ships in. The idea was to berth them in the winter off season in fresh water as is done with the fishing fleet in Salmon Bay. Bellevue at that time was way out in the sticks and there was no objection to a commercial enterprise in Meydenbauer Bay.

The whalers themselves were almost universally Norwegians and very colorful fine men, but that is another story. The original dock burned down about 1930 and was rebuilt. It is now part of the present Meydenbauer Bay Marina. The fine cedar shingle roof installed in 1930 was finally replaced (for the first time) by asbestos shingles in 1976.

The whaling season in Alaska was from late May into late September. There were two whaling stations in operation during the period of the '30s; one at Akutan in the Aleutian Islands near Dutch Harbor and the other at Port Hobron on Sitkalidak Island about 60 miles from the town of Kodiak. The ships were seaworn and rusty when they returned in the fall and, in general, remained so during the winter. Great anticipation, excitement and bustle arose in March every year when preparations were made for the following season. Chipping hammers would be busy; the boats would be chipped and painted, refurbished and repaired. I can still remember the smell of Stockholm tar as it was applied to the rigging and the ratlines. The decks were tarred and waterproofed and the boats were then towed down to the Lake Washington Shipyard at Kirkland to be drydocked and their bottoms scraped and painted and to be otherwise made ready for the forthcoming season. Toward the end of the period supplies would be taken aboard, the harpoons and powder loaded, the harpoon lines (hundreds and hundreds of fathoms of four and six-inch manila) would be rove down from the loft on the dock and into the holds of the boats and they would receive their final preparations for the summer operations. Along about the middle of May they would be loaded down almost to the gunwales and steam would be raised. On a great and exciting day the excitement would reach a crescendo and they would get underway for Alaska. A few of us would be privileged to ride on them to the locks. A great thrill.

Getting underway was a time of smoke, steam, tearful farewells and as I said before, great excitement. The boats would leave from Bellevue and at about the same time, or perhaps a day or so later, the whaling station crews would leave on the Alaska steamships from Seattle.


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Photograph of the whaling fleet in Meydenbauer Bay, 1920s.
Source: Eastside Heritage Center. L 85.39.2.