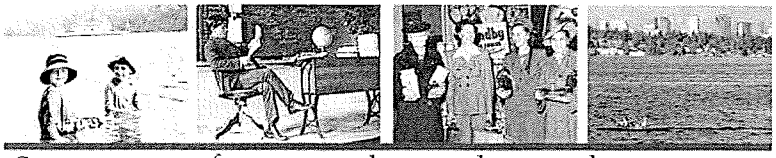
EASTSIDE HERITAGE CENTER



Connections for yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

January 14, 2010

Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan Steering Committee
City of Bellevue
P.O. Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009

Dear Steering Committee Members,

On behalf of the Eastside Heritage Center, I want to thank each of you for the time you have dedicated to the Meydenbauer Bay Park planning process over the past couple of years. The Park represents an exciting opportunity for Bellevue's future, at the heart of Bellevue's past.

Eastside Heritage Center truly appreciates the Committee's efforts to consider the historic nature of Meydenbauer Bay in its Park planning process. For much of its early history, the surrounding land was timbered, rural and agrarian, and was enlivened through the activity at Meydenbauer Bay. The proposed Draft Master Plan is very much in keeping with the historic uses of the Bay as we see them:

TOURISM & GATHERINGS. Before the Lake Washington bridges, the county dock at Meydenbauer Bay was the gateway to the community. People from all over the region visited scenic Bellevue via ferry. Thousands of visitors would arrive for the annual Strawberry Festival in the 1920s-30s, and countless others would come for summer outings to picnic and play on the shores of Meydenbauer Bay. The Wildwood Pavilion was a popular destination for groups visiting from Seattle by ferry, with entertainment including orchestras, boxing matches and even a roller-skating rink. As Bellevue began to change from a rural community into a suburban city, Meydenbauer Bay became one of its first parks, where families enjoyed recreational activities in a natural waterfront setting.

COMMERCE. Meydenbauer Bay was an early commercial hub for Bellevue, connecting the community's agricultural products to markets in Seattle, and a point of entry for supplies arriving on the Eastside. Following the lowering of Lake Washington, the Bay became home to the American Pacific Whaling Company and its fleet of commercial boats. It also served as a base for the US Coast Guard during World War II. We are pleased to see that the proposed Park Plan preserves the historic whaling building and ice house.

Thank you for proposing a Park Plan in line with the vision and principles established by the City Council in 2007, and for ensuring that Bellevue's history is honored throughout. We look forward to working with the Parks Department and their consultants on the detailed historical elements of the Park design.

Sincerely,

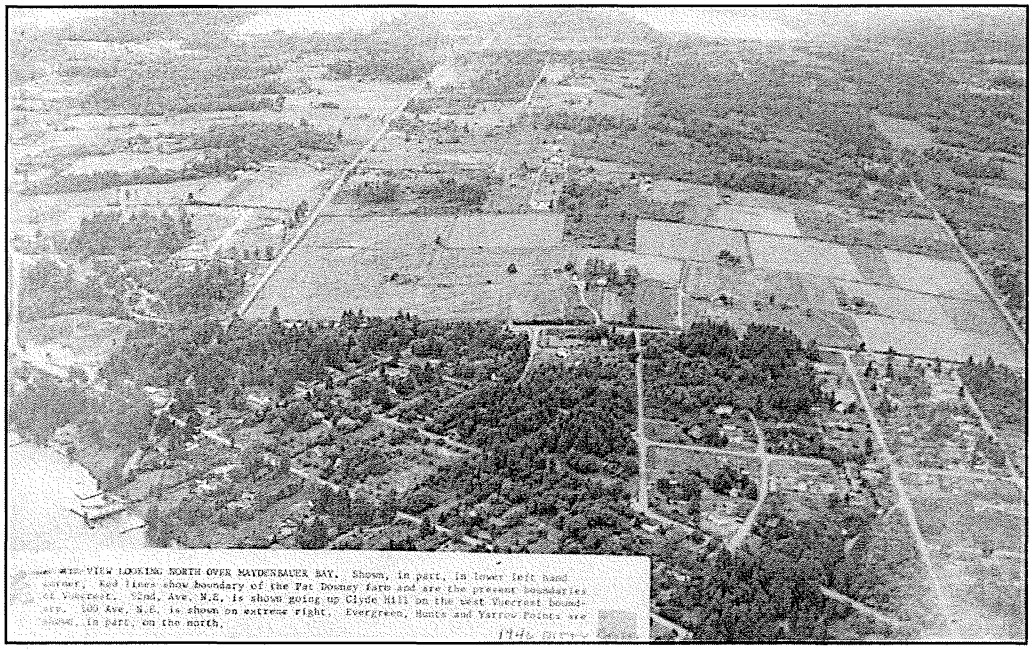
Heather Trescases
Executive Director

CC. Mike Bergstrom, *PCD Project Manager* and Robin Cole, *Parks Project Manager*

Enclosures: historic photos

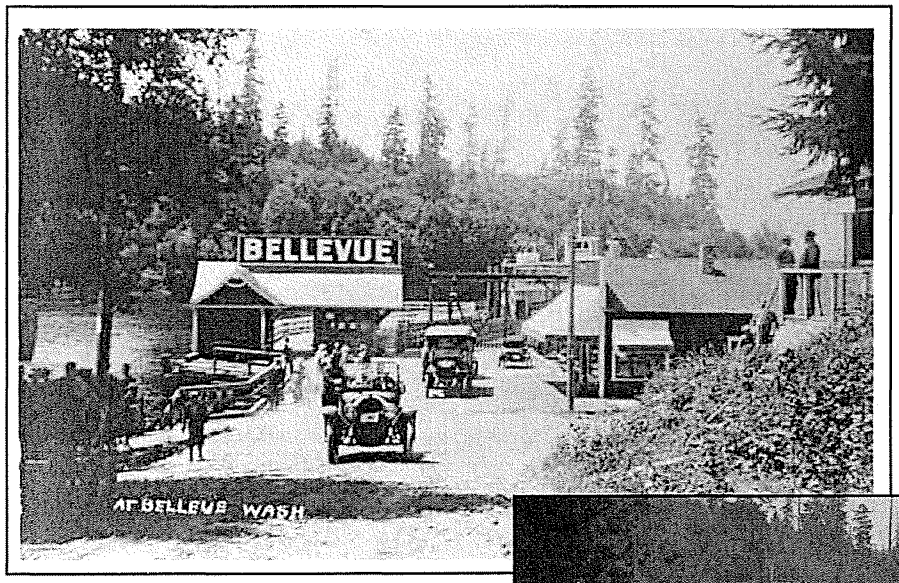
P.O. Box 40535 . Bellevue, Washington 98015 . Phone: 425.450.1049 . Fax: 425.450.1050
www.EastsideHeritageCenter.org

Meydenbauer Bay, 1902. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center

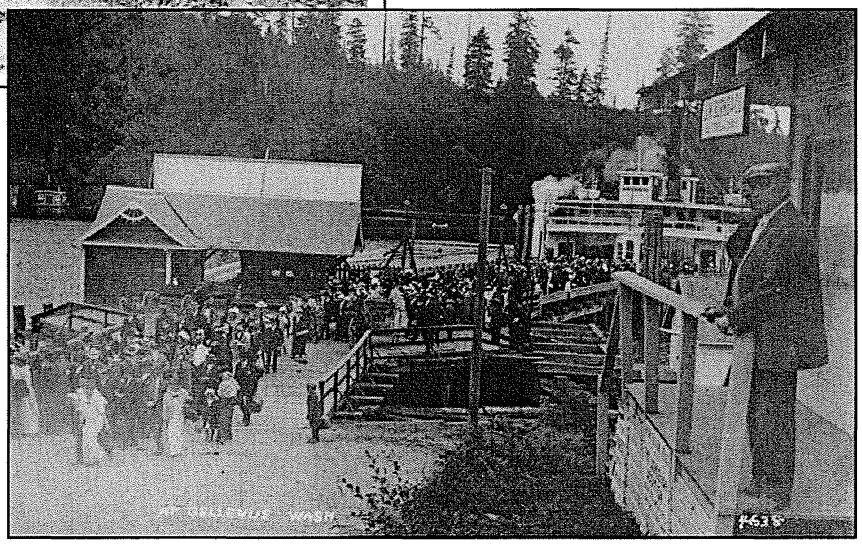


Aerial view of Bellevue from Meydenbauer Bay, 1946. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center

TOURISM



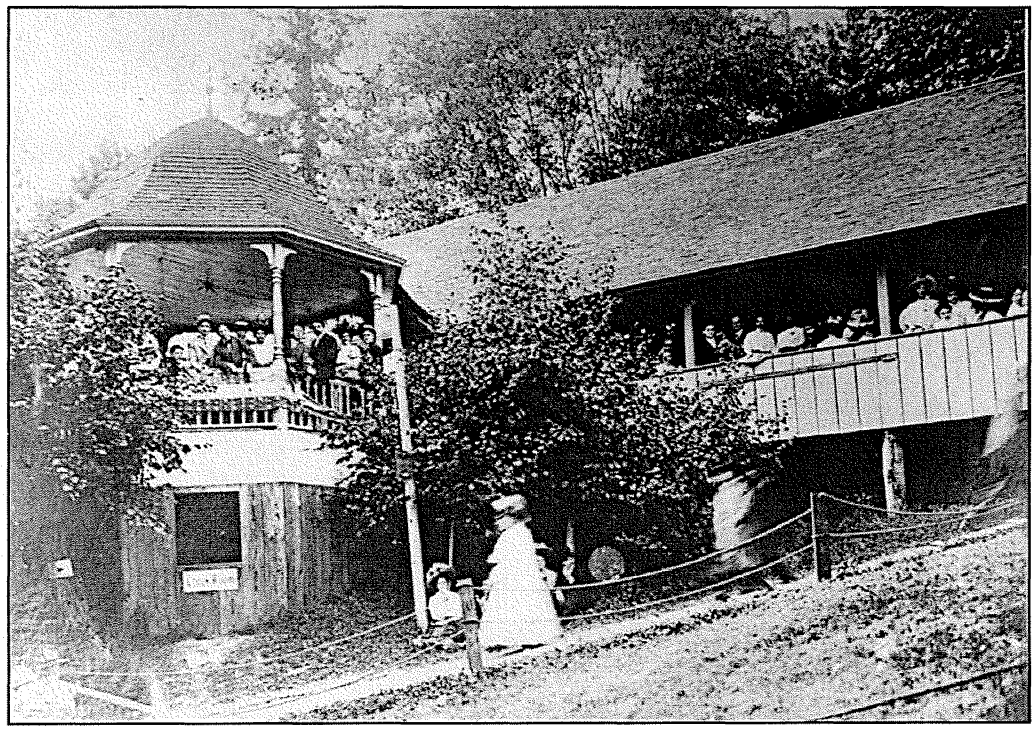
Bellevue Ferry Dock at Meydenbauer Bay, ca. 1910. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center.



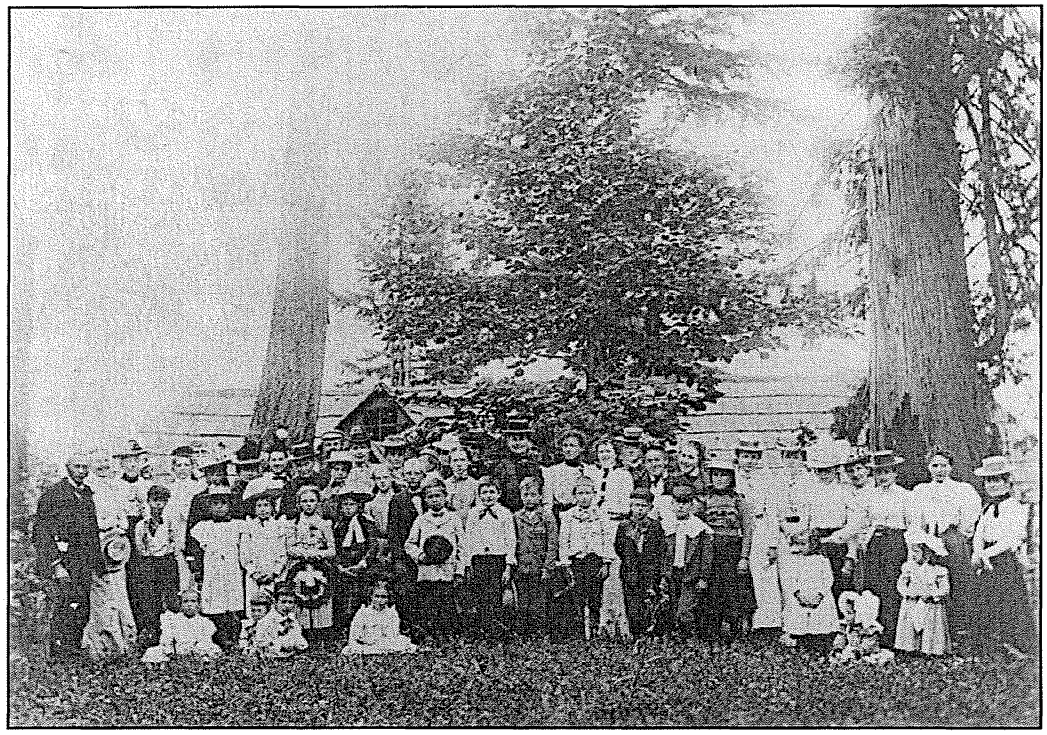
Passengers disembarking from a ferry for a 4th of July picnic in 1914. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center.

Bellevue Strawberry Festival, ca. 1935. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center.

GATHERINGS
AT WILDWOOD PAVILION



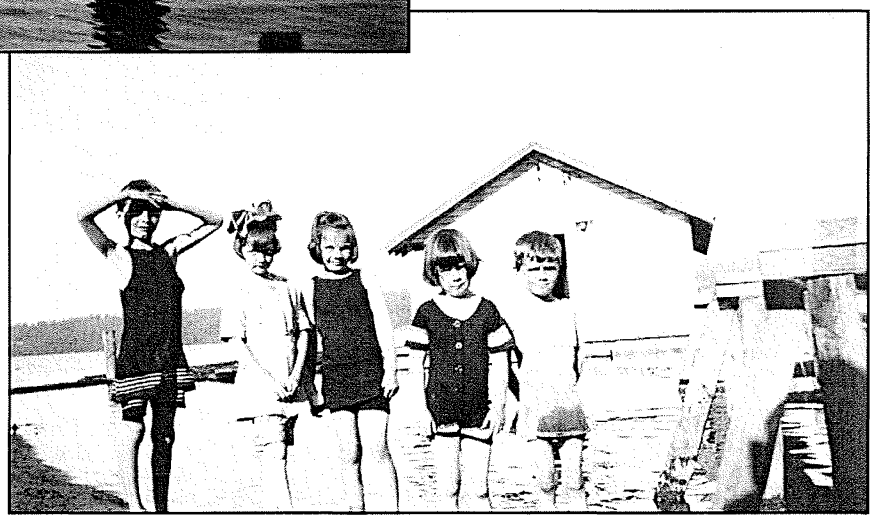
Wildwood Pavilion, early 1900s. Photo courtesy University of Washington Special Collections.



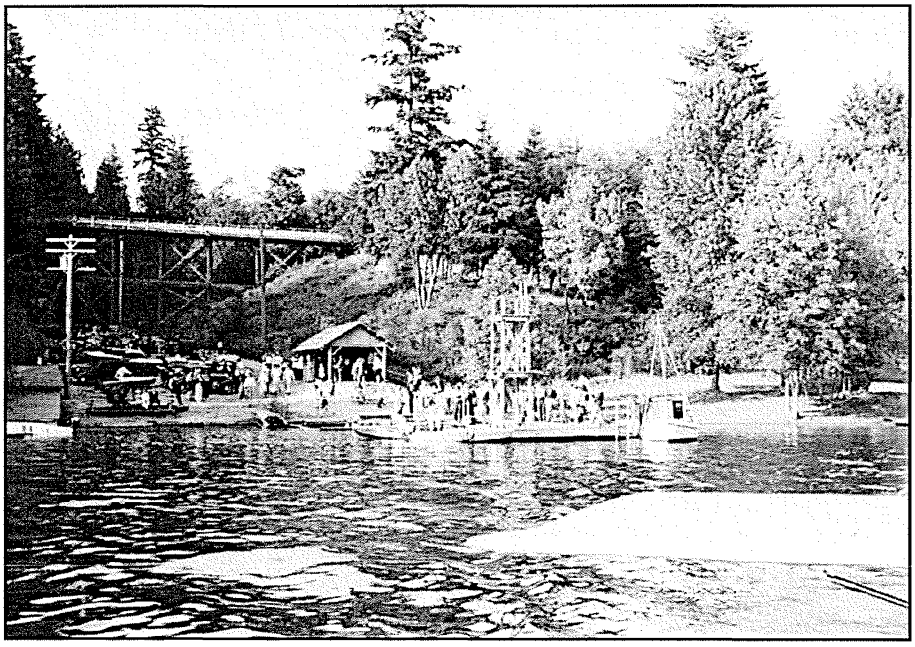
Church social at Wildwood Pavilion in 1900. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center.

RECREATION AT THE BAY

Wading in Meydenbauer Bay, ca. 1912.
Photo courtesy
Eastside Heritage Center.



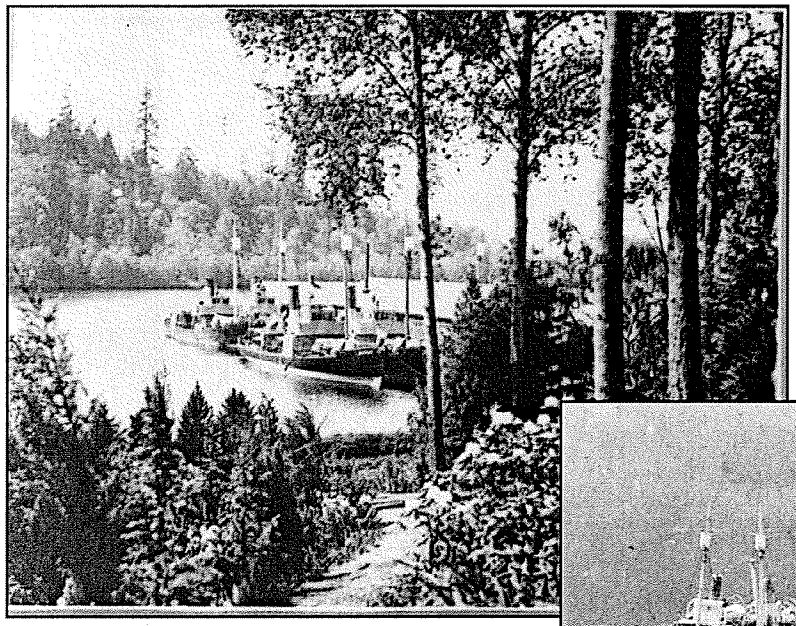
Children at play , ca. 1919.
Photo courtesy
Eastside Heritage Center.



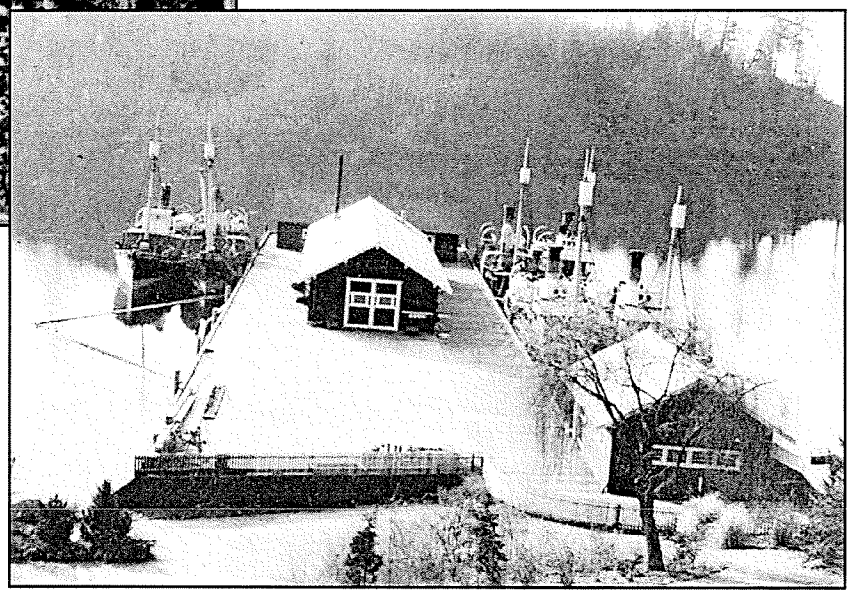
Water safety class, 1955.
Photo courtesy
Eastside Heritage Center.

COMMERCE

William Cruse cultivating daffodils at his Bellevue home, which the family sold at the markets in Seattle., ca. 1915. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center.



Whaling fleet in Meydenbauer Bay, ca. 1937. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center.



American Pacific Whaling Company pier, ca. 1937. Photo courtesy Eastside Heritage Center.