



A Cascadia Marine Trail Site History Honoring over 5,000 Years of Marine Travel

Meadowdale Park, located about halfway between Edmonds and Mukilteo in Snohomish County, includes uplands, a deep ravine with a creek, and a beach. First settled by one of Snohomish County's earliest pioneers, it has been the site of land speculation, a variety of farming ventures, a country club, and finally a county park with a salmon spawning creek. In 1997 a Cascadia Marine Trail site was added on the park's beach.

The first inhabitants were Snohomish Indians. The first European explorers are believed to have been Captain Vancouver and crew in 1792, who came ashore somewhere south of present day Everett, shot off a cannon, and declared possession for the English crown. The adjacent waterway was consequently named Possession Sound. Lt. Charles Wilkes U.S.N., surveying for the United States, followed in 1841 and gave the connecting bay the name Brown's Bay.

In 1878 John C. Lund, the first settler, homesteaded 140 acres, built a shanty, and acquired title in 1882 by living there for four years and adding improvements. Lund, born in 1825 in Bergen, Norway, was a close friend of George Brackett, a founding pioneer of Snohomish County. The ravine, the biggest on Brown's Bay, became known as Lund's Gulch.

Lund married a widow with five children, Mathilda Deiner, and soon built a nine-room house. There were no roads until much later, and all transportation was by water. The closest school for the children was in Edmonds, 4 miles south, and every Sunday Lund rowed them there, where they boarded for the week, and then he rowed back on Friday afternoon to bring them home for the weekend.

The Lund family made a living by logging, raising chickens, planting an orchard, and fishing. Lund rowed out to steamers passing on the bay to move his products to market. The family operated fish seines during the salmon runs, and cleaned, split, and brined about 20 barrels of fish per season. Salted salmon from Washington Territory was considered a delicacy in the East and sold for \$25 a barrel in Philadelphia, although Lund's fish were mostly sold to the Scandinavian fishing boat skippers, who considered his brined fish of superior quality.

Logging was the economic mainstay in the county in the early years and well into the 1930's. Hand logging was common in the years before settlement, with trees selected and felled so that they would fall in the bay to be rafted up and towed to mills. After the shoreline logs were gone, oxen were used to haul logs to water. Logging companies subsequently brought steam engines and mechanization. Lund and his step sons worked for logging companies from time to time, and

gradually logged out the towering canopy of cedar, fir, and hemlock, and cleared the tangle of salal and devil's club in the gulch.

The story of the settlement of the Snohomish County shoreline is a tale of land speculation and development based on the expected route of the Great Northern Railroad. For several years land speculators had been guessing where the terminus for the railroad would be. When Tacoma was selected as the terminus of the Northern Pacific railroad, speculation continued about the terminus of the Great Northern railroad, with considerable money riding on Everett. Land speculators platted and bought up acreage in Meadowdale with the hope that development would follow the railroad from Everett to Seattle. The railroad did indeed come through in the early 1890's, but a nationwide financial crisis slowed development. When the railroad line was surveyed through Lund's Gulch, Mrs. Lund discovered to her horror that the line ran right through their house. The railroad was induced to move the house east of the line.

By 1907, three mail trains and six passenger trains, and later as many as thirty trains went through Meadowdale daily. Lund sold most of his acreage to the West and Wheeler land development company, reserving seven acres for his home. West and Wheeler salesman Robert Maltby came up with the name Meadowdale to entice buyers, even though the imagined meadows were stump farms. Residents would recall that in his later years Lund, looking the part of a patriarch with a long white beard, would sit for hours near the railroad tracks in front of his home, watching the activities in the gulch and on the sound. He sold his remaining property in 1909 and moved with his wife to Edmonds where he died in 1917.

Local residents tried for many years to convince the county to put a road through Lund's Gulch, using newspaper articles, extensive lobbying, and chicken dinners for county commissioners. In 1913 a road was surveyed and finally built. It was used for a few years as an Edmonds/Everett route, but fell into disuse due to recurring maintenance problems.

1919 brought Prohibition—publicly supported but privately flouted. Many locals had stills or crocks behind the stove, and one of the biggest stills was in Lund's Gulch. Meadowdale, and the north coast of Puget Sound generally, proved to be a prime location for production and smuggling of liquor. The area was close to the big retail markets of Seattle and Tacoma, it was on a direct railroad line from Canada to those markets, and there were many out-of-the-way places in the deep woods for cargo drop-offs and stills. Smuggled booze was transferred from 30'-35' boats to rowboats and dropped on the beach in winter months at low tides after dark. Bottles in gunnysacks were then delivered the same night to distribution points.

Various farming ventures were tried in the ravine. Raising sheep failed because of bears. Trout farming failed because the state fisheries department would not allow the creek to be diverted through rearing ponds. By 1918 there was success with raising fruit and poultry. Although logging was the dominant industry in the Meadowdale area, poultry was a close second. Thousands of chickens, turkeys, and pigeons were raised and shipped from Meadowdale in the 20's and 30's. Visitors to Lund's Gulch remembered exotic birds as well, including pea fowl, guineas, and colorful oriental ducks and geese. Strawberries, loganberries, and grapes were also grown in the gulch, most of which were sold to wineries.

After several decades of raising fruit and poultry, the property was acquired by Meadowdale Country Club, Inc. A clubhouse, Olympic-size pool, bathhouses, and a fish hatchery were built, but the business closed in the 1960's when the access road failed due to mudslides. The closed club became a site for "kegger" parties, and the already vandalized buildings were destroyed by fire in 1970. With much local support, Snohomish County acquired title to 114 acres in 1971, razed the remaining structures, and developed the park, with additional acreage added in 1994. It continues as a much loved and well-used park.

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