

The Harbor Itself

Exploring Change Over Time in Gig Harbor



HARBOR HISTORY MUSEUM

As you look at the images of Gig Harbor...

What changes do you see over time:

- In how the land and water are used.
- In the types of buildings and boats.



Native American fishing artifacts from the Gig Harbor area



Net Weight. Stone.

Found in Wollochet Bay, Gig Harbor
The rope of a net would go through the hole in the middle of the stone. It would weigh the net down and make it easier to throw out over the water or weigh it down across a creek to catch fish. The rope would have been made from cedar fibers or roots. Members of the Puyallup and Nisqually tribes lived at Wollochet Bay.

Object ID: 2012.013.004
Harbor History Museum Collection



Net weight. Stone.

Object ID: 2001.001.103.
Harbor History Museum Collection



Canoe anchor. Stone.

Object ID: 1986.021.001.
Harbor History Museum Collection



Small harpoon. Bone.
Found in the Gig Harbor area.

Object ID: 2007.039.004.
Harbor History Museum Collection



Fishing in the harbor,
c. 1885-1889.

This view is looking into Gig Harbor with the sandspit to the right and Sam Jerisich's house at left. Peter Skansie's boat in the foreground with Johny Jerisich, son of Sam, in the stern. Sam Jerisich was an early immigrant settler to Gig Harbor.

Object ID: 2017.020.035. Harbor
History Museum Collection



View of Gig Harbor, 1889.

AJ Bale house at left,
schoolhouse farther down the
hill. Mr. and Mrs. H.
Woodworth with Chester
Hudson (seated).

Note the land cleared by the
settlers and stumps left
behind.

Object ID: 1973.007.001. Harbor
History Museum Collection



Young's Landing in East Gig Harbor, 1888 – 1890

Pictured: George McDowell, age 12. The steamboat tied to the float might be Emmett Hunt's *Baby Mine*, with which he delivered the mail to Young's Landing once a week. Later when a pier was built at the dock for a steamer landing, it became known as Union Dock.

On the left, on the far side of the harbor, are multiple Native shanties where the Harbor History Museum now stands, and the Potlatch House, which is the largest of the buildings. The houses on the hillside at the center of the photo are standing on Alfred and Rachel Burnham's original plat of Gig Harbor. The road going up the hill between the houses is now Burnham Drive. The large whitewashed buildings on the shore to the right of center is the Gig Harbor Lumber Co.'s shingle mill.

Object ID: 2006.67.132 Harbor History Museum Collection



Gig Harbor Lumber Company on the west side from the Young's Landing area on the east side, 1888 – 1891.

Frank Hall, James Parker, and Edward Prentice, originally from Albert Lea, Minnesota, incorporated the Gig Harbor Lumber Company in 1888. Logs went in the east side of the mill and lumber came out the west side onto the wharf. To supply logs for the mill, the Gig Harbor Logging Company was created in 1889. They purchased and expanded a railroad to bring timber in from the greater Puget Sound area.

In 1890 the company cut 19 million board feet, but by 1891 the lumber company was overwhelmed by its debt and sold under foreclosure to the Washington National Bank. The bank did not reopen the mill.

Object ID: 2005.078.076 Harbor History Museum Collection



HARBOR HISTORY MUSEUM



Beach Scene, Gig Harbor WN,
1913.

A rowboat is pulled up on the
sandspit at left, *Defender* in
the water. Peter Skansie's
home at the right background
with his rental cabins, dock,
and netshed on the shoreline.

Peter Skansie was a fisherman
who immigrated to Gig Harbor
from Dalmatia. His first wife
was Melissa, a daughter of
Sam and Anna Jeresich.

Peter's brothers founded the
Skansie Ship Building
Company.

Object ID: 2000.001.022 Harbor
History Museum Collection



The first dock at the head of the bay, 1900 - 1915.

The steamer *Crest* in the center with Young's Landing in the left background.

The steamboats of the Mosquito Fleet zipped all around Puget Sound, carrying passengers, freight, and mail.

Object ID: 1973.001.007 Harbor History Museum Collection



The steamboat *Atalanta*
leaving the Head of the Bay
Dock in north Gig Harbor, c.
1915.

East Gig Harbor in background.

Object ID: 1973.001.007 Harbor
History Museum Collection



Fishing boats in Gig Harbor,
after 1919.

Juno, owned by J. Ross, Sr.,
built at Babare, Tacoma in
1915. *Victory*, built at Western
Boat, Tacoma in 1919 for Tony
Gilich. *Brac*, built at Sunset
Boat and Engine, Seattle for
Pete Glass, owned by Axel
Ahlberg. *Oceanic*, built at
Skansie Shipbuilding for
Mitchell and Joe Skansie.

Object ID: 1973.011.005 Harbor
History Museum Collection

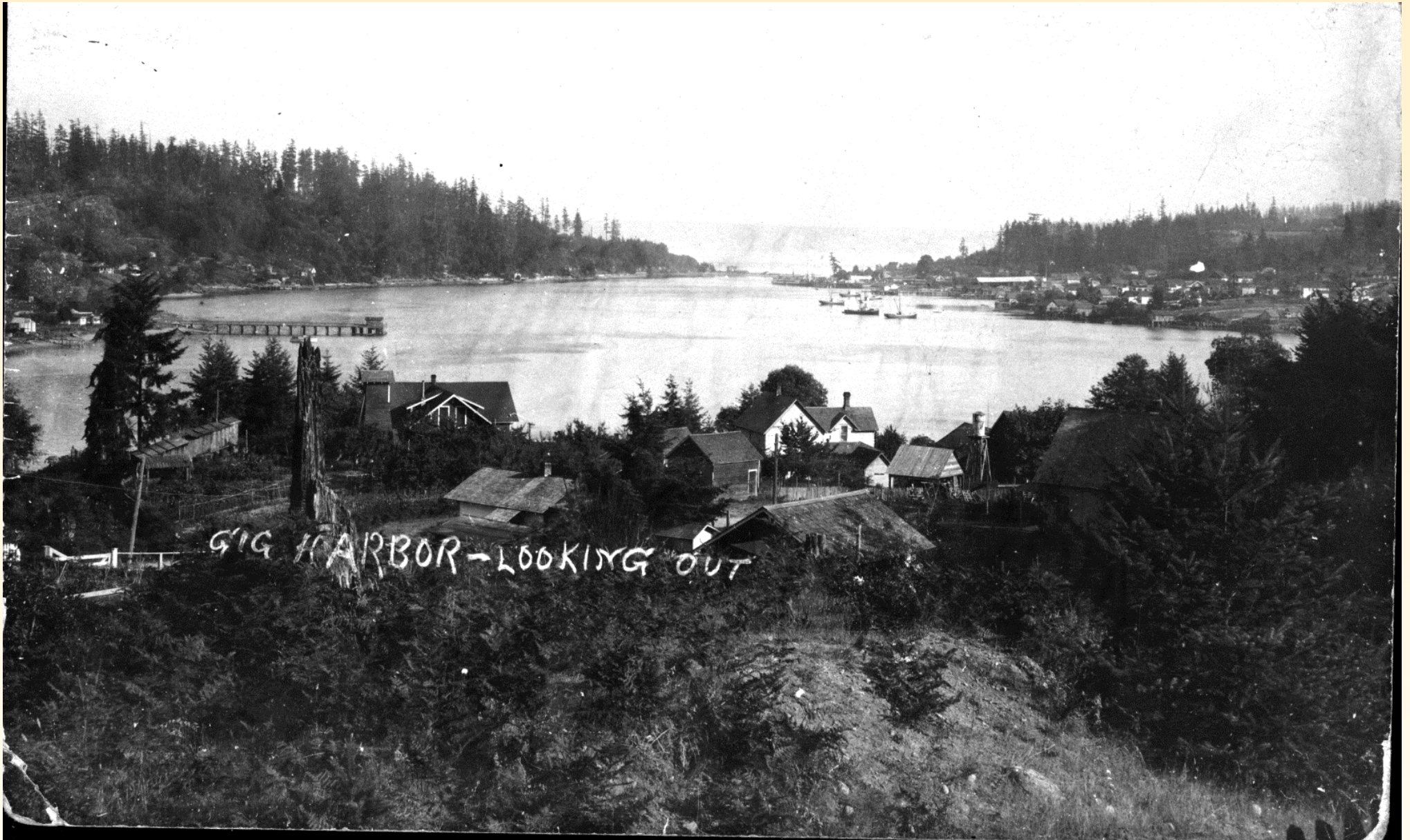


Gig Harbor – Looking Out, c.
1919 – 1924.

Taken from Peacock Hill in
north Gig Harbor. At left is the
Union Dock built at Young's
Landing for passenger
steamers.

Compare with the image on
Slide 5.

Object ID: 2000.063.012 Harbor
History Museum Collection



Log rafts and sandspit, 1930s – 1940s.

The first lumber company in Gig Harbor opened in 1888. Logging boomed in the area for many years, but eventually all the big trees nearby were gone. By the late 1950s the last mill had closed and the city banned log rafts from the bay.

Object ID: 2000.063.012 Harbor History Museum Collection



Aerial view of Gig Harbor,
1940s.

At the bottom is the ferry
dock, used before the first
Tacoma Narrows Bridge was
built in 1940, then again after
it collapsed.

Object ID: 2003.031.014 Harbor
History Museum Collection



Gig Harbor looking south, 1947 - 48.

The newly built Peninsula Yacht Basin at the head of the bay. Sweeney Building in center.

Object ID: 2005.056.017.001 Harbor History Museum Collection



West Gig Harbor from the head of the bay, 1947 - 48.

Log boom in the water off of Clay Hill. Sweeney Building at lower left.

Object ID: 2005.056.013 Harbor History Museum Collection



Compare these images with those on Slides 4, 8, and 11.

Head of the bay, 1948.

The newer buildings in the left-center were rebuilt after a fire on January 5, 1945.

Object ID: 2005.056.014 Harbor History Museum Collection



Fishing boats *Julia B.* and *Invincible* at the Babich dock and log boom in the water, April 7, 1952.

Photo by Frank Owen Shaw

Compare with slide 9.

Object ID: 2006.067.032
Harbor History Museum Collection



Boats in at the Peninsula Yacht Basin, 1953.

Sweeney Building at left. East Gig Harbor in background.

Object ID: 2005.056.015 Harbor History Museum Collection



Pleasure boats exiting the harbor, 1960s.

At left is the Washington Co-op high water dock built for steamers.

The fishing industry started to decline in the 1960s and '70s and recreational boating took over much of the harbor.

Object ID: 2000.001.037 Harbor History Museum Collection



Peninsula Yacht Basin and the head of the bay, 1960.

Sweeney Building (left) and new Shorline Restaurant on North Harborview Drive.

Compare with the images on Slides 15 and 18.

Object ID: 2000.001.037 Harbor History Museum Collection



Aerial view of Gig Harbor at low tide, 1964 - 65.

Photo by Ken Ollar.

Object ID: 2000.001.037 Harbor History Museum Collection



Aerial view of Gig Harbor, showing the intersection of Harborview and Stinson, c. 1965 – 1970.

Some of the visible netsheds have added floating docks, some have not.

Fishing families built netsheds in the harbor starting in 1910 to store nets and fishing gear. As of 2022, 17 remain.

Object ID: 2018.002.022 Harbor History Museum Collection



Gig Harbor, c. 1982 – 1986.

Compare the lower image with
Slide 16.

Object ID: 2021.001.011 and .012
Harbor History Museum Collection



Looking west



Looking north/head
of the bay



Aerial view of Gig Harbor and eastside, June 6, 1995.

Photo by Dave Baer

Object ID: 2018.002.033
Harbor History Museum Collection



View of East Gig Harbor and
Mt. Rainier, 1996.

Compare this image to Slide
17.

Object ID: 2018.002.049
Harbor History Museum Collection



West Gig Harbor from
Peninsula Yacht Basin,
November 3, 2021.

Compare to Slide 7.

Photo by Kate Dorr



Gig Harbor looking south
toward the mouth of the
harbor, October 29, 2023.

Compare to Slide 17.

Photo by Kate Dorr

