

Doorway to the San Juans Islands

SQUALICUM HARBOR OFFERS TOP-NOTCH MOORAGE, SERVICES, AND ACCOMMODATIONS

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NW LOCAL NEWS - APRIL 2004

THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS are poised at the doorstep at the Port of Bellingham's Squalicum Harbor in Bellingham, Washington. Throttle up the engines and in one-hour's time boaters can set a crabpot off Saddlebag Island or can venture north to the Canadian Gulf Islands.

"The nice thing about our location is that boaters can head into the islands and pick where they want to go," said Squalicum Harbor harbormaster Mike Endsley.

"They can head directly to Lummi, Orcas or Sucia islands and then the world's their oyster!"

Beyond location, there are lots more *nice* things about the recently redeveloped Squalicum Harbor and its 1,400-slip marina. Here at harborside, boaters discover a complete range of marine services, the inviting Hotel Bellwether, restaurants, shops, whalewatching and charter boat operations as well as beautiful parks and excellent facilities for yacht club rendezvous.

Port management boasts that it can always find room for another visiting boat and that nearby Bellingham International Airport makes it easy for guests to arrive from anywhere on the continent. What is more, within an easy walk or free shuttle ride from Squalicum Harbor, the thriving communities of Bellingham and Fairhaven offer boaters most every cultural and recreational opportunity.

THE MARINA AND SERVICES

Squalicum Harbor is located in Bellingham Bay and is comprised of two yacht basins with three entrances (east/south/west). Due to the fact that it is flanked by two federal waterways, Squalicum Creek and I & J Waterway, the approaches are maintained to a depth of at least 13 feet. That and a Class A breakwater define the harbor as a Harbor of Refuge.

This spring the Port installed a new, 150-ton travelift. The new lift in combination with a 55-ton lift and a nearby launch ramp makes marina services even more accessible.

"We've got some of the best yards and marine services in the Northwest," said Endsley. "Lots of boaters come here, stay a few days at the marina and take advantage of yard specialties that range from electronics and heating to canvas work."

Full service enterprises such as Bellingham Yachts provide a complete menu of services such as commissioning, repairs, maintenance and installations. A dealer for Albin and Sabreline yachts, Bellingham Yachts occupies 900-feet of private

dock space and offers customers moorage along with 30 and 50 amp power adjacent to its floating repair shop in front of the offices.

Several years ago during the redevelopment, the marina was reconfigured from 1,800 to 1,400 slips. As a result, it can now accommodate many more boats 40-feet and longer. While the big slips continue to have a waiting list, Endsley encouraged interested boaters to make an application. All permanent moorage patrons, including liveaboards, pay \$4.71 per foot per month.

On the other hand, guest moorage is handled on a first come, first served basis. No reservations are taken. Still, with room for around visiting 60 boats and their positive attitude, the marina staff always finds room for another boat. The marina maintains a three-day limit and transients pay \$.50 per foot per night for moorage, water and power. Dockside amenities include washrooms, showers, grocery, shopping, restaurants, chandlery and pumpout.

"We think we offer one of the best values in Puget Sound and the islands for both permanent and temporary moorage," observed Endsley. "During the summer, we also offer a free shuttle to the grocery



YOU MAY ENTER - Squalicum Harbor is a central point for boaters visiting the San Juans. A destination on its own, the harbor is home to a 1,400-slip marina.

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“... store or chandlers as well as into Bellingham or Fairhaven. We work to accommodate our boaters’ needs!”

In addition to the marina, yards and services, restaurants and several well-respected charter companies, Squalicum Harbor welcomes visitors to stroll Zuanich Point Park or utilize the Squalicum Boathouse. A great place to picnic, barbecue or fly kites, the park’s Fisher’s Memorial pays tribute to the commercial fishing fleet.

The modern, roomy boathouse is really designed as a clubhouse. While it has developed into a popular venue for weddings, increasing numbers of boating associations are capitalizing on the facility for group rendezvous parties.

For the second summer on weekends, the Port plans to sponsor a fresh fish market at Gate 7. Here, members of the Bellingham commercial fleet sell in season live spot prawns, crab, selected bottomfish and salmon. “The boaters and community have responded very positively to our little enterprise,” said Endsley. “It is great fun and you can’t get seafood any fresher!”

A BELLWETHER OF A HOTEL

By definition, a bellwether is “one that takes the lead, sets the trend.” Opened in 2001, the 68-room Hotel Bellwether certainly fits that definition. The elegant, yet comfortable hotel sets a new standard for waterfront accommodations in the Northwest. Hotel Bellwether stands sentinel at the East Entrance to the harbor on Bellwether on the Bay, a wind swept arm of land formerly known as the Peninsula,

The hotel, situated in a triangle at the point along with the Bellwether Business Building and the Paulsen Building, serves as the centerpiece of Squalicum Harbor’s redevelopment. It offers dining, lodging, entertainment and moorage at a 220-foot private dock.

“We see a lot of repeats in the yachting community because it is the easiest, most luxurious moorage in the harbor,” said General Manager Carol

Beecher, who owns a 29-foot Bayliner. “They enjoy all the amenities of the hotel, the terrace, restaurants and access to the spa and salon.” all the amenities of the hotel, the terrace, restaurants and access to the spa and salon.”

The hotel dock can accommodate the biggest yachts that visit the area. Throughout the year, guests can spot hotel owner Peter Paulsen’s 80-foot Ferrite yacht, *Freya*. To date, the longest vessel to moor at the Hotel Bellwether dock was a 160-footer and during the first, four months of the year, a 110-foot yacht from Alaska wintered there in style. No matter the length, moorage runs \$1 per foot per day with a \$30 minimum. There is an additional fee for shore power.

“We are really in tune to boaters,” said Beecher, who noted that 90 percent of dock patrons also choose a room. “Our dock is quite unique in that we offer boaters the perfect location for access to all the islands.”

During the summer months, the hotel dock is a busy place. Par Yachts maintains several charter boats in the 40 to 50-foot range there to promote charters for day and overnight use. The hotel also keeps a fleet of rental kayaks on the dock that are available to guests and the public. Departing from the dock Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evening, the 57-foot ketch, *Shawmanee*, operates three-hour, Bellingham Bay cruises.

Shoreside, the hotel atmosphere embraces boaters. The rooms and public spaces feel private and yet intimate, lavish, yet cozy. It is easy to see why boaters enjoy a night in a beautifully appointed room, suite or in the super-romantic

Lighthouse Suite. They can relax and admire their yacht at the dock as well as enjoy fine dining at the hotel’s Harborside Bistro or partake of breakfast and afternoon tea in the Compass Room.

In addition, boaters gravitate over to the Bellwether Business Building to check in U.S.



LAND RETREAT - Many boaters who come to Squalicum Harbor opt to spend a night or two at the Hotel Bellwether to use amenities offered.

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Customs, pick up a sandwich at the Mercato Italiano Deli or indulge in a massage or treatment at the Zazen Salon Spa.

At the Paulson Building at 12 Bellwether Way, boaters can work out at the Fitness Alliance or grab a cup of java at the Bellingham Bay Coffee Company. Throughout the summer, the adjacent Tom Glenn Common Park & Amphitheater host a full schedule of entertainment, ranging from outdoor movies to theater productions and music events.

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

The home of Western Washington University, Bellingham celebrates its centennial this year. From the marina, visitors walk past the recently completed Maritime Heritage Park on route to the Old Town area and the Whatcom Museum of History and Art. Near the museum, boaters find antique shops, galleries, the Radio Museum and every sort of restaurant.

Historic Fairhaven is a free marina shuttle or three-mile waterfront walk along paths and boardwalks. Reminiscent of Carmel-By-the-Sea Northwest-style, Fairhaven offers a compact neighborhood of beautifully restored buildings that house galleries, shops and eateries.

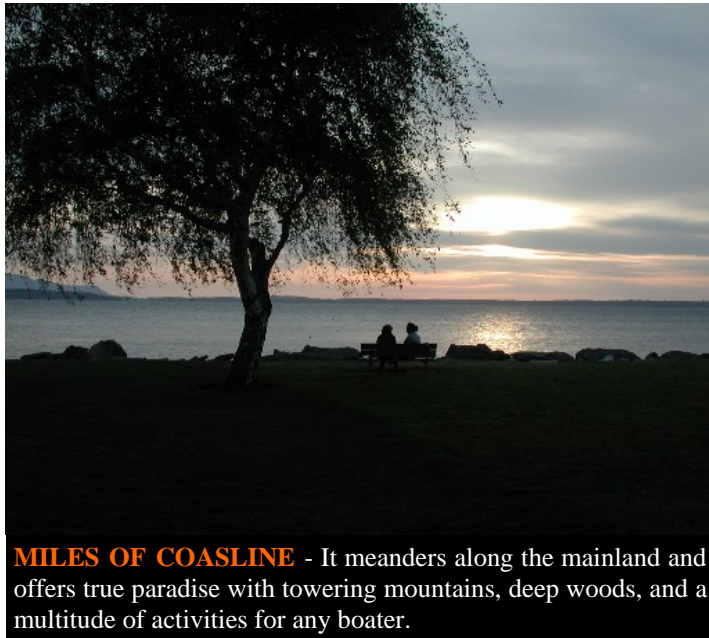
The Port has installed mooring buoys and a side-tie linear moorage system at Fairhaven. Available April through October, water and garbage and fee drop box are located on the dock.

Whether looking for marine services, an island stopover or a weekend getaway, Bellingham's Squalicum Harbor promises to satisfy visiting boaters' needs. The marina's recent redevelopment and superb "location, location," make this premier facility an increasingly favorite port-of-call for many Northwest boaters.

Tips for Visiting Boaters

HARBORMASTER MIKE ENDSLEY offers a few tips on how boaters can access and moor at the Port of Bellingham's Squalicum Harbor Marina:

- Call the marina office in advance to ask what slips are available (VHF Channel 16).
- Although the marina does not take reservations, it rarely turns anyone away. Reservation can be made for groups of boaters, however.
- Navigation is simple, due to the harbor's two federal waterways. They are deep and well marked.
- From the Bellingham Bay side of the harbor, the breakwater appears to be one continuous seawall. If you need help discerning the separate entrances, call the harbor patrol.



MILES OF COASTLINE - It meanders along the mainland and offers true paradise with towering mountains, deep woods, and a multitude of activities for any boater.