

Legends and lore of the waterfront

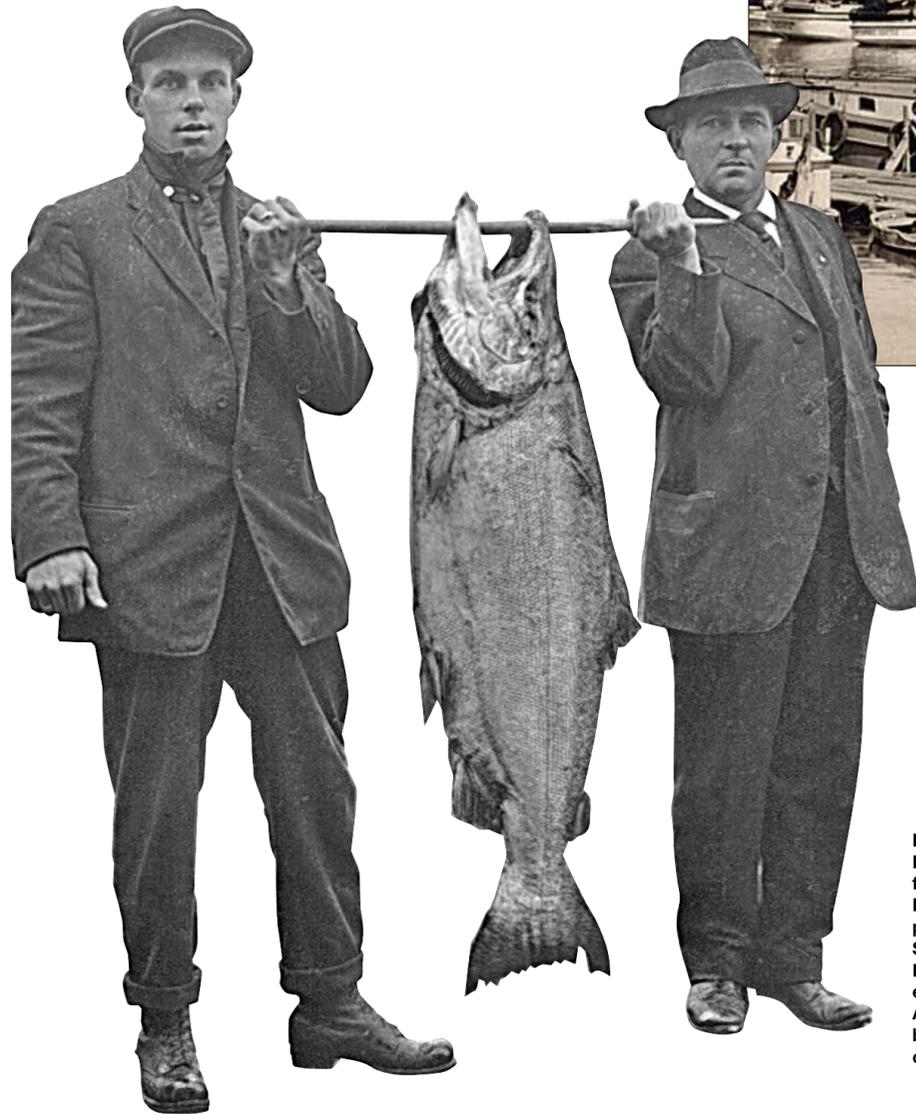
'In those days there were 50 seiners tied up outside and maybe 60 gill-netters. I understand sometimes there used to be over 5,000 fishermen in Anacortes, working the boats. They used to even have fishermen's nights and fishermen's dances.'

— Croatian fisherman Vlakto Kolega



LOWMAN FAMILY PHOTO

The purse seine fleet is pictured at Puget Fisheries' Far West Dock in this undated photo from the Lowman family's collection.



LOWMAN FAMILY PHOTO
Raymond Baer Lowman and his father, Will Alvin Lowman, display a 72-pound spring salmon. Salmon, especially Fraser River sock-eye salmon, kept 11 Anacortes canneries busy around the turn of the century.

Museum Foundation documentary explores Anacortes' fishing history

BY ELAINE WILSON
American staff writer

Anacortes really is a perfect port. Such a comment by Bill Mitchell inspired the title of the Anacortes Museum Foundation's charming and informative new documentary, "The Perfect Port: Anacortes Waterfront Legends and Lore," which was released last month by Seattle filmmaker John Sabella & Associates.

"We were the salmon packing capital of Puget Sound. We had more canneries than anyplace else and that was because we were centrally

located to the fishing grounds," Mitchell said.

Packed with historical photos, rare fishing footage and lively interviews, "The Perfect Port" is a local treasure. A toe-tapping soundtrack, with a scratchy big band rendition of "All of Me," sets the mood perfectly.

The DVD started four years ago as John Killingsworth's effort to produce a short video about Anacortes fishing history. It evolved, during an intensive creative process, into much more. With a team of

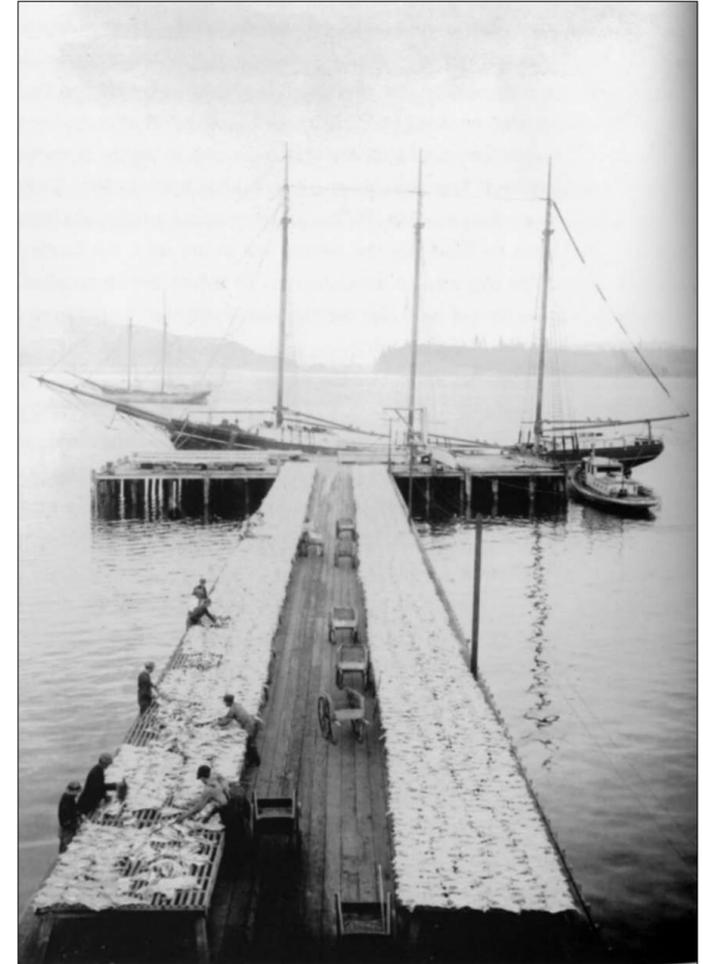
contributors, the final result is an hour-long, professional film with a thorough history of the city.

"The public's going to like it. We like it, too," said Anacortes Museum Director Garry Cline.

Killingsworth initiated the video project after he saw a series of half-hour fishing history films by John Sabella.

"He thought Anacortes, of all places, should have one, with such a rich maritime heritage," Cline said.

Killingsworth got Sabella on board. So much information and



WALLIE FUNK COLLECTION, ANACORTES MUSEUM

Codfish dry on Matheson Dock in Guemes Channel with the schooner Wawona in the background in this 1890s photo.

material was compiled that the program was extended to an hour.

"I think we spent roughly \$43,000 to get this thing put together, plus staff time," Cline said.

"The Perfect Port" will be sold at \$19.95 at the museum, the Snagboat Heritage Center and other outlets, and online by Sabella. Foundation President Bret Lunsford has scheduled a premiere screening at Anacortes Cinemas on June 6. Net profits will benefit the foundation.

The museum also gets all the historical material that was collected

and the raw footage of extensive interviews.

"There's more than what was shown on the video," Cline said.

The program starts with the island's first settlers and the Coast Salish people who helped them survive, then covers the railroad boom and bust of 1890. It follows the growth of salmon, cod and crab fishing industries from 1891 until today.

Local residents who appear in "The

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