

**Scharenberg/White Lake History**  
**(concise overview from Eddie Scharenberg's written family history document)**

**Karl (1809-1892) and Albertina Von Scharenberg**

- lived in Germany, worked for royalty as an overseer of farms and forests so was given the title Von
- 8 kids: **Edward** (1840-1939, died age 99!), Julius, Herman, Amelia, Louisa, Charlotte, Hermine, Jane.
- 1858 felt threatened by unrest against the royalty, so sailed to Quebec, Canada, down the St. Lawrence River to Buffalo, NY, ended up at Blue Island, IL. Edward (Karl's oldest kid) was 13.

**Edward** served in the Civil War! He married Bertha from Lucerne, Switzerland. Bertha had 2 kids, then they had 5 kids together: Alfred, Julia, Estella Edward H., **Herbert Stanley** (born in 1884, Edward's youngest kid)

**Herbert Stanley (1884-1960) and Myrtle Scharenberg**

- Herbert was the 1<sup>st</sup> in his family to graduate high school
- He was a top shooter, and loved hunting and fishing
- He worked his way up as a banker, treasurer, fire dept volunteer
- 1907- he had a son Herbert Oliver (Herb Jr)
- 1918 tragedy with formaldehyde so he was ostracized and "pushed" out of his job; they moved.
- 1925 Herb and his Chicago hunting club went to Montello
- 1926 Herbert and Myrtle moved to Montello bought house on the lake (current restaurant) 4 BR up, kitchen, parlor, dining room down.
- Brought telephone wire to the lake, put in walkways, cleaned up the beach, built picnic tables..
- Herb worked as a hunting/fishing guide, served drinks, Myrtle cooked.
- Drive from Chicago took 7 hours, so most people took the train to Princeton and got picked up.
- 1927- built big chicken coop to raise mallard ducks for decoys, built diving board and pier, flagstone walk to the lake.
- 1927 ice house was built with walk-in cooler underneath to store beer kegs and food for the summer. The ice was cut by local farmers in long 3' strips, then cut to 3'x3' blocks, done every year until 1940s. The Ice House was later made into a cottage, named the Bomb Shelter since it had thick walls to preserve the ice. It was located right inside the gates to the resort. The Bomb Shelter was later torn down to build the Shoreview I and II duplex.
- 1928 Logs were cut on a neighbor's farm to build a log cottage-2 BR, large living area with stone fireplace, screen porch, large outdoor patio in back, called Happy Hours. In 1963 it was replaced by a duplex- saving the stone fireplace- called Happy Twin and Happy Hours. The log cottage "Smoky Pine" was already built before the log cottage Happy Hours was torn down.
- 1928 A screened porch was added to the house and a local mason built a stone fireplace in the dining room and connected the bar to the dining room with a stone porch. The stones were gathered from local farmers' fields. Montello Granite Co. made the mantle piece.
- In 1930 A dance pavillion was built called the Hay Loft.
- Early 30s they built a Motor House- large electric generator powered with a Ford Model T
- Myrtle built a pond in front of the dining room with a bridge and swan statue (called the Swan Pond), filled with bluegills for kids to fish. In 1950, a child almost drowned so they drained it and built Beachview cottage on the site in 1954.

- First guests at the resort were 10 guys on a fishing trip-4 stayed in the cottage and 6 in the upstairs bedrooms of the main building. Myrtle cooked for them, including corn fritters! The group had so much fun they came again in the fall.
- Herb made a deal with a guy who owned most of the north shore to build a duck hunting blind (2' wooden structure sunk in the sand- 3 sides with 4' slots of glass, and a sliding roof)
- Herb used live mallards as decoys- attached to a 4' cord to an anchor. Trained them to get used to gunshot- every time he fed them he shot his gun a couple times. Wild ducks would fly over once or twice, then they would open the roof and shoot. They never shot ducks that landed to protect the decoy ducks. Herb had 2 water spaniels to retrieve the ducks or the ducks would float to the resort if the wind was from the west, and Myrtle would pick them up.
- Late 30s the Depression hit and they limited the season. Herb worked in Chicago banking and came to the lake on weekends with Herb Jr.. Myrtle stayed at the lake.
- Water levels varied and sometimes seemed to run in 7-year cycles. During a low level year they put in large waste granite blocks and covered them with gravel to get to the blind, the blind was used until the mid-40's. The blind was locked up but stayed there many years.
- By the mid-40s there were many summer cottages and homes on the lake.
- By the 1940s business was good again! Herb bought a boat and Myrtle wanted it for a cottage, called the Houseboat Cottage. It was torn down in 1964 to make room for apartments and motel rooms. They built more cottages.
- 1940 Dining Room was enlarged by taking out the wall between the parlor and the dining room to now seat 20 people.
- 1945 (after WWII) Herb Jr became a partner.
- 1945 there were 8 cottages and a big dance crowd. They built a parking lot to hold 100 cars and people also parked along the road up the ½ mile away. There was still no plumbing- they had a big outdoor bathroom with 4 stalls for women and 4 for men, with long lines waiting. They knew they had to build on!
- Construction: built a cocktail lounge with bathrooms- the bar was downstairs with bedrooms upstairs- and remodeled the Tap Room, added an office, etc. They built a circular bar to hold 50 and a straight 30' bar for the Dance room.
- April 1947 Grand Opening had 400-500 people
- Fall 1947 Herb Sr and Myrtle took many vacations to Dakotas, Montana, and to the SW. Myrtle loved the Mexican culture so she decided to redecorate the restaurant with a Spanish theme, called The Spanish Room. She bought many items and shipped them to the lake.
- 1952: Myrtle died 4-29-52, Herb Sr. sold resort to Herb Jr, and they exchanged houses.
- Herb Sr hunted and shot gun for many years. Herb Sr died 10-21-60, age 75.

#### **Herbert Oliver Scharenberg (Herb Jr) (1907-2000) and Ruth Scharenberg (1912-1991)**

- Herb Jr. met Ruth, stayed in Chicago during the week for school but came to the lake to work on the weekends. He put ice in the coolers, filled the oil lamps, stocked the bar, put lime in the outhouses.
- Herb and Ruth married in 1934 and had 4 kids: Norma, Edward H "Eddie" 1936-2021, Herbert J "Snooky" 1942-2023, and Frank, born in 1946.
- In 1945 they moved to Montello and lived on a farm 2 miles from the resort, the last farm on 18<sup>th</sup> Road right before Hwy 23, the current Welke farm.

- Herb Jr's family were all busy at the resort:

**Norma:** waited tables

**Edward "Eddie":** (10/7/1936-6/27/2021) stocked the bar, swept inside and out, picked up garbage, washed glasses in the bar, head cook, quit resort to care for parents, 3<sup>rd</sup> generation owner w/ brothers, family historian

**Herbert Jr. "Snooky"** (12/23/1942-7/4/2023), mail carrier for 28 years, wife Barbara, daughter Angela (Jeff) Davis, White Lake: did odd jobs and managed the boats, lifeguard, bartender, 3<sup>rd</sup> generation owner w/ brothers Eddie and Frank.

**Frank** born 1946, took people to the units and carried luggage, 3<sup>rd</sup> generation owner with brothers, then owner, built the golf course.

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