

Recollections of Beach Creek

I spent many years in Qualicum; had my first summer jobs there; at 13, as a “Boat Boy” at 2 boathouses which used to exist there, Nomads & Qualicum Boat House for \$15/week; loved every minute of it cleaning boats & fish, etc.; & picking up tips from the Guides; &, then started guiding at 15, until I went up to Campbell River Painters Lodge at 17. But, we spent summers in Qualicum from 1958 on; so, I know that area, really well, lots of trout fishing & stuff.

The creek that ran right thru the middle of the old golf course & hotel next to the road you drive up from the beach to town; it was so prolific with salmon, that the first nations had built these old staked fish traps right in front of it; although, you could only see them at low tide by the 50’s, tons of trout in it, truly an amazing stream; it just plops on the beach through a culvert now I think. I wonder if salmon still go there? They were mainly coho.

Used to make so much noise going up through the heavily riparian bush area that the Golfers would complain. Run used to start around Thanksgiving back then, & was still going when I left around 1969. Also – in the 30’s there was an old hatchery built there, in the lower reaches, we could still see parts of it back then; doing, believe it or not – rainbow. So, in addition to the usual cutthroat; it still had lots of these ancestral rainbow stocks in it; especially in the upper reaches.

General Money used to spend a lot time there; he has a fly named after him; &, was featured in many Haig-Brown books; he was a great “buck-tailer” surface trolling flies for coho in the sea, not too far off shore usually, back then.

Unfortunately, they really damaged the upper reaches, drained it a lot of stuff, so, it went downhill, but a few good pools in the lower reaches remained, mainly cutthroat. We would be fishing in a few pools the golfers had to drive over, so, quite often, they came pretty close if they didn’t make it – it was a bit scary at times!

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