

After they had left in the rain-ridden dark, I sat with my sense of property, of family heritage, utterly shattered. Half a century or so? Four generations? Opposed to the tribal memory of the Squamish people? I was soon able to cope with this dismaying concept - can't we all, most readily, rationalize in our own favor questionable situations that touch close to home? But it has left me far less glib when matters of aboriginal rights arise - another factor. I suppose, of personal experience.

Today, after almost a decade's hiatus, I am back weekending at Brunswick Beach, thinking seriously of making it finally my home. It would be derisory to say it has not changed. The shack after all, is finally gone. The summer homes and cottages have largely vanished, too- the one I am in among the last and I'm contemplating even its early end. They've been replaced with large new dwellings, often complete with lawns.

Where once we found our way at night by the aid of bugs, we watch the news on cablevision. I certainly can no longer, as my mother did until her death last year, refer to it as camp. Yet it is not, quite, suburbia.

Across the railway tracks, above the highway, the mountains still loom, part of them at least unlogged. The hummingbirds still flit about, the cedar waxwings occasionally drop by, the jays, though fewer in number, still come looking for an easy meal. A magnificent pair of eagles swooped down from Squamish the other day, harassed by a flotilla of angry gulls, and landed briefly in the big Douglas fir out front. A skunk underneath the cottage is as detectable as ever. Before us still stirs the sea, the narrow stretch of it between us and Gambier Island, no copper yet scarring its shore. To the north, Anvil Island sits serene, the often mist-shrouded Bali Hai of my childhood, an Island I've never set foot on (and I think it would be foolish to do so now). The tides still bring us logs for the fireplace floating on sea water that remains as clear as any mountain stream. We are not besieged by summer tourists, for the road from the highway leads only to our homes. My patch of this good earth is littered with trees, and none will go to make way for our new home. It's an exhilarating mixture of wild and tamed, almost a trademark of British Columbia.

As I set this down on a perfect sunlit day in early summer, looking out past the peeling red arbutus tree my mother planted, I feel almost as though I am fulfilling destiny. For I am writing by a window

overlooking Brunswick Beach, just as my grandfather, some 45 years ago, told me he dreamed and prayed I one day would.

And down on the beach, my youngest, a sturdy four year old, has discovered (after the first frustrating visit or two) how to move agilely about, leaping from boulder to log with sure-footed aplomb. And he has learned that barnacles will cut and that little crabs still scurry when the rocks are rolled away. He's started. The shack is gone. It never will be camp for him. But Brunswick Beach will probably do.

This article is submitted on behalf of the Lions Bay Historical Society by Annemarie Gates. Current members include: Myron Loutet, Tony Cox, Trudi Luethy, Fran McNichol, Sheila Blake, Patricia Belvedere and Anne Page.

Regarding the Author Don Stainsby

Written by Glenn Gates

Don Stainsby was born in the late 20's, and attended school in Vancouver. He enrolled at U.B.C. in the 40's & 50's, where he was very active the universities well known newspaper, The Ubysey.

After U.B.C., Don wrote for all three of Vancouver's newspapers, two papers in Victoria and then on to Montreal. He also wrote and published several history books.

He returned to the West coast and lived at Brunswick Beach from 1969 to 1981 on property owned by his parents, who started rowing up Howe Sound from Horseshoe Bay, in the early 1920's. The Stainsby family owned four lots at Brunswick Beach, now numbered 45, 47, 49 & 51 (comprising of about 1/2 of the north road). as well, a home was owned at "M" creek, which was destroyed by the flooding of "M" creek. Nine people lost their lives in this disaster in the 1980's.

Don died in 1981 leaving a wife and 7 children.