

Reminiscences: I'm nearly 100 years old and missing the good old days ...

Fishing for memories, part 2



by local contributor
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As the summer days got nicer and I began thinking about going fishing, I had to figure out when and where to go. We could now drive up the Middle fork of the Snoqualmie to Dingford Creek and either hike into Hester or Myrtle Lake.

I had to plan this trip during the week so that I could leave work on Friday afternoon and drive up to the trailhead. I had to bring along a Bunson Burner to do my cooking on or do it over an open fire.

Planning my camp vittles

Then, what to plan to eat. Coffee and hot cakes were a must. Then I would also need some syrup as well. A few strips of bacon or some sausage wouldn't hurt either. Then a couple spuds, one for breakfast and another that I could wrap in foil and heat up for dinner.

Of course, I was going to catch some fish for dinner and breakfast the next morning. Just in case that didn't happen I needed to bring along a can of hash or spam.

I would need a box of hardtack and some cheese to go with it wouldn't be too bad.

Then I would need to bring a frying pan and a coffee pot. Oh, yeah, I would need a turner and something to eat with beside of my fingers.

A Hershey bar and a box of cookies should round out that list.

Packing the gear

Just in case, I should bring an extra pair of socks and also an extra set of shoelaces as I had trouble losing them during the night as the packrats loved to chew them off right at the eyes on my boots.

Now, get out my packsack and sleeping bag. Where did I put them the last time that I used them? I carefully packed everything into the packsack and added the sleeping bag.

Now did I forget anything? OH YES. I am going fishing so I had to unload the sleeping bag and make room for my tackle box and fishing

basket and fishing pole. Don't forget matches and a ground tarp. How did this pack get so heavy?

Time to go!

Finally, Friday came along and after work, I hurried home and loaded up for my trip.

First, I had to check the air in my tires and gas up. Gas is getting so expensive now days. I also brought along a Forest Service map so that I could check out other possible lakes in the same area. I drove up the Middle Fork Road to Dingford Creek and left my car there.

Hiking in to Hester Lake

Putting on my pack and making all the adjustments, I started up the steep trail to the timber line where it started to level out. How did this trail get so much steeper that it did when I worked for the Forest Service? Who put a brick in my pack?

I never carried a canteen as there were always cold mountain creeks crossing the trail where I could stop and get a drink.

I finally got to the fork in the trail to decide which lake to go to this time. I decided to go to the right and on up to Hester Lake.

When I got to the first creek, I took off my pack and decided to get a drink. Instead of drinking at the crossing, I went upstream and discovered that an animal had drowned in that creek. That changed my mind on how I was going to be drinking in the hills.

It was another uphill climb up to the lake but I made it before it got dark.

Solitary camping and fishing

For some reason I just settled for some cookies and a candy bar for dinner that first night and after laying out my tarp and sleeping bag, I hit the sack.

I never met another person all the way there and I had the whole lake to myself. I gathered some firewood and used a firepit that someone had used before.

This lake sat in a draw with the tops of mountains all around in a tranquil setting. Rock rabbits and whistling marmots were scampering around gathering their food. Fish were rising on the lake and the sun was just rising above the tops of those mountain tops casting a reflection on the mirror lake. Fishing was great and I hope to do it again soon.