

Take a trip down Hatchett

Hatchett Creek has so much to offer, but some folks don't go quite far enough. As we enter, of course, Pennamotely Creek will be on the right. A little further on the left, slow up and notice the pine trees that have V-shaped slashes cut in them where folks recovered the sap and made turpentine. Children need to see this bit of history.

As we come up on the island, we can go through the narrow cut. Better be careful-sometimes old tree parts will wash up overnight and are hard to see. Besides, you need to go around so that you can see Bee Branch in the cove on the right. All the way across to the left behind that little tiny island was where the tornado killed the fisherman.

The big body of water that we are sitting in now was commonly referred to as "the end of the world." Where it got that origin, I'm not sure, but my friend that lost his life in that tornado had a good idea! The next creek on the left is Weogufka-muddy water, but it sure is pretty up in the rapids. I don't recommend that you try going up there; you will probably run aground before you get out of sight. The point on the left was Dollar Post Office! So, from the mouth of Weogufka is all that the average boater sees. Come on out of Weogufka and continue up Hatchett, and you will cross "Barrett's Flat" on the right. You will see a very quaint little village, known as Barrett's Camp, going way back. The nicest folks you will see anywhere, my friends Edsel and Dot Hughes. Edsel inherited it from his uncle, Leonard Barrett. It's unique in that the power company leased the property to Mr. Barrett to sub-lease so that working class of people could have a place they could afford (if that's not fact, it certainly should be).

Wow! This was one of my favorite places since I was a small boy. Folks from everywhere would go there. He had a lodge-like building and some very nice cottages for that time. I mean, lots of folks would drive from Birmingham or Montgomery to go to Barrett's Camp.

After I came down here to work, of course, I fished Hatchett mostly, especially crappie fishing. Mr. Barrett knew exactly when the spawning time would be-or, as we called it, "running the banks". One day, I asked him what he thought about the upcoming season. "Well," he said, "I think it's going to be like the ladies dance: sweet and soon over with."

After Mr. Barrett had left us, I was over talking to Edsel when these two ladies came by asking if maybe their husbands had come by and they missed them. I got them calmed down a little. The husbands took them by the public landing at the steel bridge and told them a time to pick them up as they were going to put in upstream, and they were about four hours late! Where did you put them in? "Well, it was up near Mt. Moriah Church." Wrong creek. I tried to explain, but then I went up Weogufka and sure enough they were paddling in that flat water for a long time. I don't know whether they were glad to see one another or mad. Who were they mad at? Who's fault was it? If those ladies had not stopped to ask about them-who knows, they my still be paddling. Or, what if the ladies had gone home thinking they had found another way home! Only someone that has canoed both creeks could understand that story.

We even had another "camp," Howell's, back in the old days-but it was all the way to the steel bridge! Not gonna take you up there. You ought to try it in a flat-bottom boat-very carefully and slowly until you learn the channel.

Hope you enjoyed the cruise-gotta get home and check on my baby!

- Attaway's original "Cruisin' the Coosa" column was published in The Clanton Advertiser in the 1980s and 90s. He can be reached at coosacruiser@att.net.

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Suggest removal)

The fun part is putting in at the first steel bridge and riding the rapids and still water all the way to the river.

Of course the steel bridges are gone now. Replaced with ugly concrete. But the lillies still grow wild all the way. I have seen coyotes, deer, raccoons, a bald eagle, owls, and wads of snakes in those waters. But best of all, I saw God. At least his handiwork.

Suggest removal)

Have to agree with you 100% on the beauty and nature of Coosa Co. being some of God's greatest handiwork Mustang. We grew up going out to Panamotly and to this day raft down Hatchett every chance we get, especially around mothers day just to see the Lillies. It is a secret I hate to share

with many because of the fear that some will destroy the beauty and serenity of the area. We have a secret spot, nicknamed the "Holiday Inn", that we love to frequent with the kids to camp and fish that is far better than any vacation spot I have ever encountered.

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