

# Crown Mansion

AT QUALICUM BEACH

*A SLEEPING BEAUTY AWAKENS.....from an era genteel and elegant comes the revival of the Crown Mansion at Qualicum Beach on Vancouver Island.*

The Crown Mansion and grounds are the centre point of a six-acre development that combines its rich history with the elegant comforts of today. From this synergy emerges a grand colonial revival estate and a wonderful place to call home .....and to think it all started with a fishing trip.....

It was in July of 1913 when General Noel Money first visited Qualicum Beach. He was enamored with the area which led him to purchase six residential lots from the Merchants Trust and Trading Company, which was in the process of building a golf course and the Qualicum Beach Hotel as well as selling residential lots. General Money returned to England to conclude his affairs there and returned in 1914 to become the Resident Manager of the Merchants Trust and Trading Company while his own home was being built – that home is known today as the Crown Mansion.

When asked how the General came to select Qualicum Beach as his last stand, he responded:

“An accident, if you will. In 1913, with my family, I was on the way to Campbell River, seventy miles north, to fish for the tye salmon, king among the swimmers of all waters. When my eyes fell upon the bay that sweeps in from the Strait and I beheld this noble landscape that rises behind me and compared it with all other spots that I had ever seen, I came to the great decision. To build a home and remain here was the one desire. Before the walls were completed, war was declared. When the Armistice was declared, I returned to Qualicum Beach and finished my home.....”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A History of Vancouver Island’s Best Kept Secrets, Bradley C. Wylie 1992 {Noel Money 1867 -1941}

Alas, the outbreak of World War I did, in fact, cause General Money to return to duty in England. In his absence, the Qualicum Beach Hotel was converted into a convalescent hospital for wounded officers. When the war was over, the now Brigadier-General Money returned yet again to Qualicum Beach and became the Manager of a new company that ran the hotel and the golf course.

Given that one of his strengths was his ability to move comfortably in the upper social echelons both in Canada and in England, over the next 17 years, he entertained many Governor Generals of British Columbia. The Money's also hosted royalty (the King of Siam was a special guest in 1934) and several celebrities such as Bing Cosby, Errol Flynn, Spencer Tracey and, according to urban legend, John Wayne was also a frequent visitor when he sailed in the area in his yacht "The Wild Goose".

During the years of the Great Depression, times were very tough for most everyone and the Money's also encountered their own difficult times with the hotel. When Mr. Money died in 1941 at the age of 74, the Mansion was sold to a neighbour, Major Jim Lowery. Of historical note, Lowery had started the Calgary-based Home Oil Company in 1925 – the largest independent oil company of its time.<sup>2</sup>

When R. A. (Bobby) Brown Jr. engineered a takeover of Home Oil, Major Lowery suggested that he buy the Money property in Qualicum Beach as a summer and weekend home, which Mr. Brown did in 1952. The Brown's went on to enjoy the property for well over forty years.

As the Mansion had sat vacant for several years, the Brown's engaged the services of an interior designer from Vancouver and the entire interior was redone. A carver from Europe was also hired to do ornamental carvings with a music theme for the entrance, mantles and window valances. A beautifully-detailed family crest adorns the large fireplace in the Mansion's spacious lounge and the rare wood paneling that is featured throughout was custom-milled in Vancouver. Four uniquely different fireplaces were also completely re-built and they are located throughout the Mansion adding to its overall warmth and character in this magnificent home.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.qualicumbeach.net/heritage/history](http://www.qualicumbeach.net/heritage/history) - The Brown Property Preservation Society, Qualicum Beach, BC

The Mansion further boasts large, traditionally-styled rooms with six bedrooms, six bathrooms, a games room, living room and a spacious modern kitchen. The elaborate crystal chandeliers and elegant crown moldings are still evident today. One need only take in the stately staircase located in the main lobby to become as enchanted as Mrs. Brown must have been when she first stepped into the Mansion after it had been completed renovated.

The Brown's used the property extensively and built a swimming pool, cabana and tennis court on the grounds. Today, the cabana retains a distinctive 1950's charm and character. A stable complete with groomsman's quarters and horse paddock was also built so that their daughters could continue with their equestrian training during their summer holidays. They also enjoyed entertaining and held annual fall weekends with special invited guests.

Mr. Brown added to his family estate by purchasing the surrounding golf course in 1955. When he passed away in 1972, the family sold the golf course to the Town of Qualicum Beach. The house remained in the Brown's Family until 1999 when it was sold to John Merrick who then sold it to developers from Courtenay - otherwise known as the Crown Isle Management Team.

The Crown Mansion has since been fully renovated and transformed to her original grace and is now a boutique hotel offering overnight accommodations with its six elegantly-appointed bedrooms upstairs. Its timeless elegance begins from the moment you drive up its circular driveway which leads to its *port-cochere* entrance, otherwise known as a "coach gate". This is the architectural term for a porch or portico-like structure at a main or secondary entrance to a building, through which it is possible for a horse and carriage or motor vehicle to pass in order for the occupants to alight under cover protected from the elements.

Once inside the Mansion, guests will be enchanted as they take in the ageless ambiance of the staircase, the sparkling crystal chandeliers and the British-Colonial decor. They will further appreciate the custom-designed wood carvings and well-appointed crown moldings evident throughout the intimate dining room, genteel lounge and library. Guests can settle into an opulent suite complete with four-poster beds, slipper tubs and a living area with a sweeping ocean view or a tranquil garden view.

The all-embracing branches of 300-year old Coastal Douglas Fir trees sit adjacent to the Mansion and offer a natural protective canopy to the meandering walkways. Filtered sunlight dapples the moss, ferns and woodland flowers and makes the dew drops sparkle. Visitors are encouraged to enjoy the peace and tranquility of this natural treasure through the abundance of walking paths and serene sylvan surroundings.

.....and the story continues with the addition of 16 luxurious Villas which have been seamlessly constructed within the original Crown Mansion infrastructure. Residency in the Villas at Crown Mansion continues the tradition of elegant living with the flexibility of optional recreational property management.

A commitment to quality and attention to details are just the beginning. Building on the experience already developed by the Crown Isle Management Team, owners of the Villas at Crown Mansion can take advantage of management initiatives and infrastructure already perfected and in place.

Each villa offers 1000+ sq. ft. of exquisite comfort that boasts a fully-equipped kitchen with triple waterfall granite countertops, custom-designed lacquered maple cabinetry, hickory-engineered flooring, crown moldings and two gas fireplaces with granite hearths. Other amenities include a heated tile floor in the *ensuite* bath, air-jetted tub, stacking washer/dryer, custom window coverings and private veranda.

Underground parking is also included with an elevator to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors. An optional designer furniture package is available for those wishing to enter into the rental program. Owners can use their Villa exclusively year-round or place it in a rental program designed to maximize return for those owners wishing to spend only part of the year on Vancouver Island.

Future plans include cottages nestled around the perimeter of the property, a day spa and a glass dining room observatory.

Discover more about this exciting venture at [www.CrownMansion.com](http://www.CrownMansion.com) or contact any of the following members of our sales team who would be pleased to facilitate an exclusive showing.

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