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**Sent:** Wednesday, June 20, 2001 10:20 AM  
**Subject:** Inside Passage Journal #2

### The Adventure Continues

The morning after our adventure with the two young brown bears, our travels continued north through the narrow fjords of Fraser Reach and then Grenville Channel. Unfortunately, there were low overcast skies so the peaks of the steep mountain walls on either side were hidden from view. Waterfalls were plentiful, however, and naturally with all the rain we have been experiencing were quite lovely and full. Our crew relaxed and read while Joann and Pauline happily planned our next dinner menu. We tried another successful recipe, a marinated flank steak with horseradish mustard. One should not go hungry aboard the Inside Passage.

Butedale was a point of interest that day. It is the massive, abandoned cannery that we pass every year. We didn't notice any significant changes from last year, except that each year there are fewer and fewer buildings and docks. It is still so hard to envision an operation of this scope that employed over a thousand workers in its prime.



At days end, we selected an interesting spot called Baker Inlet. The entrance is an extremely tight passage several hundred yards long called Watts Narrows. It is deep but very narrow with swift flowing tidal currents. Backing up would be extremely difficult. Carl used the VHF radio and sounded the horn to announce our entry as well as our exit the next morning. There was a concern that another boat would be approaching in this blind "one way" lane. It was raining so hard after dinner that we chose to stay indoors and keep dry.

### Entering Alaska



It continued to rain all morning but finally let up some in the afternoon. We chose to take advantage of the following wind and calm seas across Dixon Entrance, the border with Alaska. As we crossed the border into the United States, Pauline asked if we should sing the "Stars Spangled Banner" or "Oh Canada". We opted for neither. We anchored in Bullhead Cove off Kah Shakes Point and hiked the outer island which has beautiful rock formations sprinkled with mica that sparkle in the sunlight.

The big city – Ketchikan - was our next stop. The weather was very cooperative and clear skies made our tour around the town much more enjoyable. There were three large cruise ships in port so things were booming. We split up and let the Reiters explore on their own while we headed to our favorite shops. Everyone found some treasures, some more than others. Not saying who was laden with the most bags, but Carl had only a few nails and small boat part that he had purchased at his favorite retailer, Tongass Trading. We joined up for a lovely dinner at the Cape Fox Lodge and then strolled back to the boat moored in Bar Harbor, north of town.

## Anan Creek

We departed for Anan Creek, our very favorite bear watching spot, although we knew we were too early for the salmon to be running. Even without bears & salmon, it is a very peaceful setting and a nice hike. There are some beautiful wilderness areas enroute that unfortunately we always skip because Anan is so special. We have stopped there 14 times in the past 17 years. We saw a black bear grazing in a meadow even before we anchored. We floated up quietly so we could watch from the jet boat and, hopefully, get some good photos. The bear gave us a good laugh when he scratched his backside on a post for quite awhile. Then we cautiously hiked the boardwalk path to the bear observatory. On the creekbed along the way, we spotted another black bear grazing in the tidal grass. We approached to within 20 yards and observed from the boardwalk. We announced our presence to him, but he chose to ignore us even to the extent of lying down and eating from a prone position. We, of course, picked the most ferocious looking photo from our camcorder video for our journal.



There were only a couple of salmon in the pool before the falls. They looked larger than pinks so we assume they were chum salmon. This is a very special place, and in some ways, even more beautiful with no other humans around. There was an impressive additional improvement made to the area since our last visit. They have added a really sturdy stairway down to the top of the old fish ladder which is the best observation area during the salmon run. Upon our return, we noticed the first black bear still grazing in the meadow. He was still there when we raised anchor to move to sheltered Fools Inlet for the evening.

Fools Inlet is a commercial crabbing area. After anchoring, a crabby crabber came up along side to tell Carl that he was mad that we came in too fast and rocked his boat. Carl apologized and he backed off from an argument he was anxious to have. The crabber later stopped by to apologize for his anger and made a peace offering of some crabs. Carl politely declined. We didn't want to get into a discussion of kosher food laws.

## Wrangell



We proceeded the next morning up Zimovia Channel to Wrangell, a town that dates to the Russian period. The water was flat and the scenery serene. Both Carl and Jack received greetings from their kids for Father's Day. We toured the town from one end to the other. A mini-cruise ship arrived around the same time that we did, so there were various tours offered to them. We walked to Chief Shakes Island, a native island with a longhouse & totems, where we tagged on to the tour inside the Indian longhouse. The local guide was quite knowledgeable and the artwork and artifacts were impressive.

At the north end of town, we viewed the petroglyphs on the beach. They are ancient rock carvings thought to be many thousands of years old. Their locations are not marked and you must wander the beach searching for them amongst the other boulders and rocks. They are covered by the high tides and somehow have survived, but the markings on some are becoming quite faint. When we toured the city museum the following morning, we learned that we erred in our first journal. The rock paintings we saw in Desolation Sound are pictographs, not petroglyphs, which are rock carvings. We stayed over to see two WWII bombers at the airport. A B-17 and B-24 were in

town for a couple of days on a multi-city tour of Alaska.

Tuesday we arrived in Petersberg for our switch in crew. Thanks to Pauline and Jack for their company and their humor, and to Pauline who spoiled us with her gourmet cooking.

Carl's 35mm cameras have not even come out of his camera bag this year. Digital cameras are as much of a revolution to photography as digital electronic charting was to vessel navigation. Each day's photos are touched up, titled, and printed by the end of the day. The digital world of the future has arrived on the *Inside Passage*.