



Lying Low The major storm that we mentioned at the end of our last journal finally arrived about nine hours late. We wasted an entire travel day sitting at anchor just off Pruth Bay. What a terrible dilemma...forced relaxation! But fortunately, with this group it was absolutely no problem. Winds hit 40 knots when the storm finally passed through overnight, but we were anchored securely and rode it out with no problems.

Bella Bella Now known by its native name, Waglisha, Bella Bella is one of the small aboriginal communities along the Inside Passage. It serves as a main supply and communication center for north-central British Columbia. We shopped in the Bella Bella Band (tribe) general store near the dock and did find some fresh fruits, vegetables and bread, albeit a very limited selection. There was not much activity in town, and we left with the sad feeling of having visited a depressed economy.

Cavorting Orcas We had some active visitors traveling up Mathieson Channel with us. About ten or twelve orcas appeared and cruised along with the *Inside Passage* for quite some time. They did not appear to be feeding. Instead, it seemed more like school time with mothers educating their children. Orcas are

matrilineal with even the much larger males following the dominant female. On two occasions, a mother and calf came right towards the boat, slipping under to surface on the other side. Although the water in that portion of Mathieson Channel was over 800 feet deep, the orcas set off the boat's depth alarm as they swam under us. It was our observation that they not only knew where we were, but were enjoying our presence. The feeling was mutual.



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Klemtu The next morning coming into Milbanke Sound we did experience some moderate Pacific Ocean swells, vestiges of Friday night's storm. For a break in our cruising, we stopped in the community of Klemtu just south of Princess Royal Island. The surrounding area has recently been designated the Great Bear Rainforest for the rare white subspecies of black bears or 'spirit bears' native to the area. Known to scientists as Kermode bears, these animals have never been exposed to civilization and the hope is for them to be protected. Klemtu is just thirty miles north of Bella Bella, and its people have an interesting history. Klemtu comprises two different First Nation's clans, the Kitasoo and the Xaixais. Although much more authentic than the names given by later arrivals, the pronunciation of the native terms can be quite a challenge. The two clans have co-existed for many years and have apparently created a successful community.

Ecotourism The original inhabitants of Klemtu sold cord wood to passing steam ships in the mid 1800's. Later, a fish cannery was the primary income source. Today, the community is working on developing an ecotourism industry, to which their impressive traditional, yet modern long house (see photo on previous page) serves a valuable dual use to continue historical customs and to educate tourists. Douglas Neasloss, the local native ecotourism guide, did an excellent job giving us a guided walking tour that lasted close to three hours. It included a tour of their fish hatchery, the ceremonial long house where we were encouraged to beat on a log drum, and detailed explanations of the native use of local plants for food and medicines. Our experience was enriched by being able to sample some of these like fireweed pith, silver fir tips, and dried herring roe on seaweed. A young intern named Michelle, from the Province of Ontario, two thousand miles east, accompanied us and assisted Douglas with the tour. With an undergraduate degree in Parks and Recreation, she is pursuing a graduate degree in ecotourism (see photo on previous page).



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Khutze Inlet This gorgeous inlet off Fraser Reach, with surrounding 3,500 foot high mountains, was chosen for the night's anchorage. The snow-capped peaks generate lots of waterfalls cascading off the steep canyon walls (see photo on previous page). The group kayaked in the evening and watched several curious seals periodically pop up their heads nearby. The next morning the early risers counted over thirty seals lying on the mud flats of the nearby Khutze River. We took the jet boat up river to search for bears but found only a lone Merganser and her chicks. Nevertheless, the majestic setting made the exploration worthwhile.

waterfall we have named Boat Wash Falls gave us nothing interesting to report. "About as expected" was heard from the veteran crew. We settled into Lowe Inlet off Grenville Channel for the evening. We have always loved the massive waterfall here, and anchored the boat close in to the outflow from the falls. It was chilly, but a beautiful setting for dinner on the upper deck. The next morning, we had the inlet to ourselves as we explored the old cannery site at a very low tide looking for more coins. On our first trip north in 1984, Joann's sister Loretta found a 1910 Canadian nickel among the rotting pilings. In 2000, their brother John found an 1894 U. S. half dollar at this same location. We were obviously anxious to try our luck again. No coins or valuables were found this time, but we saw broken dishes encrusted with barnacles, the partial remains of a long-dead octopus, and minute flakes in the stream of what was either gold or mica depending on who you want to believe (see photo on previous page).

Prince Rupert The latest weather report said yet another storm was coming our way, so we wisely headed into Prince Rupert. As the largest coastal community north of Vancouver, this town of 30,000 is the transportation center of northern B.C. linking the Canadian Pacific Coast to the rest of Canada by rail, highway, air and water. We were fortunate to secure the last dock space at the



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Prince Rupert Yacht Club. Excellent Wi-Fi connections were available from two unknown sources, and Carl accessed his secondary accounts and picked up almost 100 emails (and unfortunately an equal number of spam messages). We walked into downtown and ate dinner at the Rain Dining Lounge which was a very high-end restaurant for such a small community. The AAA Tour Book gave it three diamonds. Notwithstanding what was described as “funky Vancouver décor”, the dress code was “frontier formal” which means anything from clean T-shirts on up.

Got Booze? On our way up Steamer Passage, the captain and sole crew of the Lady Josephine, a small gill net commercial fishing boat, hailed us on the radio. He asked if we would be interested in some freshly caught sockeye salmon. We know from past experience that the commercial fishermen have a problem with fish caught in their nets that are not the currently permitted catch. Out of season fish cannot be sold to the fish processors, and are either given away or taken home for personal consumption. The fisherman explained that he was devastated at having just received news that his mother was diagnosed with cancer, had to rush back home, and needed something to “calm his nerves”. His story would have been more believable if he had not anxiously requested some alcohol in exchange. He threw five good sized sockeye salmon into our fishing net (**see photos on previous page**) in exchange for a bottle of wine and a small amount of cash. He actually tried to refuse the cash, but we insisted. It was obvious he would have preferred hard liquor. Most yachts our size would have all kinds of liquor onboard, and clearly, this fisherman misjudged us as hard drinking yachtsmen.



Khutzeymateen Grizzly Bear Sanctuary With mist clinging to the forested mountainsides (**see photo**) we headed into this very special inlet where we hoped to see some bears to round out our wildlife tally. Khutzeymateen is the first area in Canada to be protected specifically for grizzlies and their habitat. We checked in with the friendly ranger, Norman Faithful, who has had the position since the sanctuary’s formation eleven years ago. After four visits, we are now on a first name basis. The floating ranger station has been nicely expanded, so we were not at all surprised to find that the fee had tripled to \$15 per person per day. We celebrated the Schafer’s 38th wedding anniversary with chocolate cake and ice cream. On our morning exploration at low tide, we saw only one young grizzly grazing in the grass along the shore. We also saw a solitary black bear feeding similarly during our exit from the sanctuary.

End of the Second Leg We paralleled the border between Canada and Alaska for several miles, and proceeded to our final anchorage in Bull Head Cove and a fresh sockeye salmon dinner before heading into Ketchikan to complete the second leg of our cruise. Our American grandchildren and son-in-law Ron arrive tomorrow for the Alaska portion of this summer’s cruise.