

2010 Alaska Cruise Journal # 1

Bon Voyage Beginning our six and one-half week voyage to Alaska aboard our vessel *Inside Passage*, we departed from our home dock on Mercer Island and traveled through the Lake Washington Ship Canal and the Hiram Chittenden Locks to Puget Sound. The first portion of our 26th consecutive annual voyage will be along the Inside Passage, the 1,000 mile long sheltered marine waterway that connects Seattle, Washington to Skagway, Alaska. Our crew consists of our two American grandsons, Nick Migliore and Brad Akin, both 15. This is their fourth cruise with us and they will be along for the first three weeks primarily in British Columbia, Canada. Our good friend and Maui neighbor Bill Faia completes our crew. Bill is also a return crew member having traveled with us in 2003 from Prince William Sound to the Alaska Peninsula.

San Juan Island Our first night's moorage in the town of Friday Harbor was chosen to provide an opportunity for Carl to visit with Todd Kromer (**photo**). Todd is his former business partner with whom he operated the Rainy Daze teen club and presented rock groups such as Alice Cooper and Ted Nugent in the late sixties in St. Louis. They had a great time reminiscing about the 'good old days' in their early business careers. Their



partnership began when Carl was 26 and Todd was only 16. Todd picked us up at the harbor and conducted a thorough tour of San Juan Island. The tour included passing Mona, the resident camel, along with numerous deer, several foxes of various colors, and an alpaca ranch. We visited the lovely home that Todd built on Mt. Dallas. Even though we had visited the island many times, this visit provided the additional treat of a glimpse of the local lifestyle. The San Juan Islands are noted for their warm sunny climate relative to many other areas in the Pacific Northwest.

Vancouver, B. C. After crossing the international border in the middle of Haro Strait and raising the Canadian flag on the mast, we headed across a calm Strait of Georgia to the Coal Harbor Marina located in the shadow of the many high rise buildings in downtown Vancouver. The marina is also a short distance from Stanley Park, located on a sizable peninsula that juts out into the Vancouver Harbor. Bicycles are a new addition to our experience this year. They are stored on the top deck next to our kayaks and shore boat. We lowered them (**photo**) in

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preparation for our seven-mile circumnavigation of the bike/walking path on the sea wall of the park. As we toured, we had the choice of looking inward into a temperate rain forest or outward at the various marine activities of this world class sea port.

Supplementing the visually stimulating architecture of many new high rise condominiums, the new Convention Center addition to the Canada Place cruise terminal stands out with its sod roof and impressive architectural lines. Adjoining the Convention Center is a sculpture of a breaching orca fashioned as if built with Legos **(photo)**. Next to our marina and adjacent to the Westin Bayshore Hotel, we found a red statue of an Asian man squatting, one of eight identical statues clustered in a circle. Nick borrowed a straw hat from the statue's head and we couldn't resist mimicking the statue for our group photo **(photo)**.



Ancient Cultures After hearing our glowing description of the British Columbia Museum of Anthropology, Bill encouraged us to make a visit on one of the many mornings the boys slept in. Both for the modernized interpretation of coastal native longhouse architecture that this facility represents, and for the First Nation's treasures that it houses, this museum on the campus of the University of British Columbia is the perfect introduction to the ancient culture of this region. Many of its ceremonial regalia artifacts were previously appropriated by the Canadian National Museum in Ottawa in the late 1800s, but later returned to the area after museums like this were built to house them. The visit was a good refresher for us and an introduction to Bill of this advanced pre-contact culture that existed before the arrival of the early European



explorers.

As a special highlight of this year's trip, we are planning to visit Haida Gwaii, the native term replacing the name Queen Charlotte Islands as maps are re-printed. On this portion of our cruise, we will visit and view the actual remnants of the great Haida nation that is now attributed to have inhabited this area for over 10,000 years. More information and a map of the area will follow in a later journal.

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Museum Exterior Located on a bluff overlooking the Vancouver Harbor, the architecture of the museum mirrors the lines of the adjacent reproduction of an ancient 1st Nation longhouse (photo).



The Creation Our amateur models (Bill and Joann) examine the yellow cedar sculpture “*The Raven and the First Men*” by Bill Reid, a Haida master carver. The sculpture depicts the native concept of the creation of man. Questions to ponder include whether being released from a clamshell is less accurate than the portrayal of Adam and Eve and how each culture attempts to comprehend their origins without any contact between them (photo).



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Museum Interior The massive contemporary architecture is an interpretation of historic Haida post and beam construction. The great room contrasts with our models who are examining the remains of a native canoe (photo). .

