

2012 Alaska Cruise Journal # 3



A New Crew After dropping our first group off in Juneau, we headed south to Petersburg (56 48.597 N, 132 57.597 W) to pick up new crewmembers Barry and Suzanne Goren who are long time friends from Seattle. The hot weather we had experienced for three days reversed itself transitioning to the more typical Alaskan gray skies accompanied by almost non-stop rain.

Doug Comes Through Carl learned that his long-term mechanic Doug Janes was going to be in Wrangell (56 27.915 N, 132 22.938 W) repairing another vessel's stabilizers about the same time we were planning to visit. It was a tremendous coincidence because the pump that controls two of our heads (toilets) had failed a few days earlier. Although he had ordered the replacement diaphragm which had been delivered to Alaska by Barry and Suzanne, Carl knew that the challenge might be greater than his mechanical skills. Doug had graciously offered to remain in Wrangell long enough to install the key part and was waiting at the city dock at noon when we arrived.

He immediately began work while Carl served as his "go-fer" retrieving the 50 odd tools and parts stored in various locations onboard. After four hours in the

amid-ships bilge (photo), Doug got us back to a four-head fully functioning vessel and still caught the 5:00 PM flight back to Seattle. Doug has been and remains a key component in our ability to travel over 90,000 nautical miles with never having to lay-over a single night because of mechanical or electrical problems.

Chief Shakes House While Doug and his assistant Carl were repair men, Joann and our new guests explored the small community of Wrangell. Initially visiting the site of the nearby Chief Shakes Longhouse, the Gorens posed in front of construction-in-progress (photo) as the longhouse is



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being totally rebuilt. Originally built in the 1800s by the native Tlingits, it had been rebuilt by the CCC in 1940 and again remodeled in the 1980s. They visited with the construction crew and learned that a grand re-dedication is planned for early May 2013. Other stops were the town museum and Petroglyph Park.



Almost No Bears From Wrangell, we made a run of about 30 miles southeast to the Anan Creek Bear Observatory (*56 11.157 N, 131 53.600 W*) to visit one of Alaska's premier black and brown bear viewing areas. It has been a favorite and frequent stop when in Southeast but this visit proved disappointing. Early enough in the season that the U.S. Forest Service permit requirement for visits was not in effect, we hoped we might still encounter some bears arriving early anticipating the start of the pink salmon run. Two USFS interpreters were on duty preparing for the official bear viewing season which begins on the 5th of July. Unfortunately we encountered only three other visitors, all human. Although a beautiful wilderness setting and well worth the walk, we did not see any bears enroute to or from the observatory located at the waterfall.

As we were going through the process of loading our shore boat back onto the upper deck, Carl noticed the leader of the local group from Wrangell with whom we had visited at the observatory. The man waved as his group went by in their small skiff and Carl waved back and proceeded to begin to raise anchor.

In fact, it was not a wave but an attempt to point out a brown bear sow and two older cubs that were on the nearby shore. It was too late to reverse the departure procedure. As a result we watched our fellow observers through our binoculars as they viewed the bears up close (**photo**).



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We proceeded further south along the Cleveland Peninsula and anchored in Frosty Bay. After dinner it was time for kayaking. In preparation for Alaska, Barry had taken a pre-trip kayaking lesson in Seattle. We downloaded “Big Red” the largest of our kayaks (**photo on preceding page**). Although a bit wary in anticipation of his first paddle in salt water, he proved to be an enthusiastic and energetic kayaker.

The Hike Was Great But...

Continuing into Behm Canal, the rain finally subsided and we and the Gorens were anxious to get onshore and do some hiking. We settled on the Manzanita Lake Trail ([55 34.902 N, 130 57.606 W](#)) on Revillagigedo

Island just across from the Misty Fjords National Monument. Unless there are established USFS hiking trails, it is virtually impossible to simply walk in the dense temperate rainforests of S.E. Alaska. We donned our rain suits and high-topped rubber boots, which locals commonly call “Alaska sneakers”. Under clearing skies, it soon became warm and sunny. Alternating between muskeg swampy lowlands and temperate moss-covered rain forest, we followed a corduroy trail in fair condition across the mostly marshy land (**photo**).

...A Five Hour Wait Since it was the first full moon after the summer solstice; we were not surprised that there would be a 10 foot tidal swing in the six hours after our arrival.

We anchored the shore boat as far off shore as possible because we knew we were arriving at high tide. After our two-hour pleasant walk in the wild, we returned to discover our jet boat high and dry on a rocky shelf (**photo**).

We attempted to maneuver it



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back into the water but the tide was receding at the rate of a foot every fifteen minutes.

We were able to turn the boat to face the right direction, but the tide was moving quicker than we could. We quickly accepted the fact that we were stuck until the tide would refloat the shore boat almost five hours later.

Carl went into Boy Scout mode and started to build a fire with extremely wet wood, never an easy challenge (photo).

To pass the time, we told stories, sang songs and gathered kindling for the fire which reduced the effect of many small flying insects. At 9:05 PM, the

exact time of the prediction that won the pool for refloating the shore boat, we returned to the *Inside Passage* for a late dinner.

The prize for the joint winners of the pool was to be served first their portion of the remains of the cake from Barry's birthday which he had celebrated the preceding day (photo). A tiring and trying day, but well worth it to observe the beauty of this special location.

Although exhausted, we nevertheless watched two episodes of *Friday Night Lights*, the recently concluded TV series. The Gorens had brought along the entire five years of programming and our crew has become hooked.

As the night ended, we watched the full moon, the cause of our stranding, as it reflected off the water surrounding our peaceful anchorage.

