

Sunday July 12, 2015

Last post was from Tofino



on Wednesday (see *First Big Trip Part 1*). In it I mentioned ongoing pain in my right hand, this is being much better controlled with a splint I wear most of the time but an x-ray will likely be needed once we are back in Everett.

The weather has ranged from heavy mist to heavy rain since we arrived in Tofino with not much change expected for the coast for the next few days. Since we have really met all of our “learning objectives” for the trip we have decided to head back inland before some heavy winds come up tomorrow.

We went from Tofino back out into the Broken Island group. Our family project has been to get some value from Clarice’s Canadian Salt Water Fishing License. We’ve tried trolling with just a plug, and later with some anchovies we purchased in Tofino. We finally met with some limited success while trolling from the dingy in the Broken Islands. The problem was that she caught two rock fish in a rock fish rehabilitation area so they both had to go back home to grow and make more rock fishes. We certainly have not caught one of the huge king salmon that we keep seeing being cleaned at the docks.

Yesterday was the first time we dove in our SCUBA gear. It was an OK dive once we got into the shallows above 25 ft. Clarice’s zipper is leaking and caused her arm to get cold when too much sea water entered her suit so we didn’t stay down long.

All of the coastal communities are under water restrictions because of lack of rain. I think they rebuilt their stores considerably with the rain that fell Friday night. We had a heck of a time lifting the kayaks back onto the deck as they each had several gallons of water in them.

Last night we spent anchored in Bamfield Inlet where we tied everything down in preparation for off-shore travel. We left the harbor about 5 AM along with all of the fishing boats as it has been well

reinforced for us that smooth water typically lasts from early AM until early afternoon and then it can get very ugly.

We are just entering the Strait of Juan de Fuca with low clouds, drizzle, and about 2 miles of visibility and can see the sun starting to break through the clouds at the east end of the strait.

Wednesday July 15, 2015

After 14 hours we arrived in Victoria and spent only our second night at a paid mooring. We slept well, Jarvis exercised his legs and confirmed that the “facilities” were adequate and we were ready to see the world with new eyes in the morning.

We haven’t been through the Royal British Columbia museum in a number of years so we took the morning going through the exhibits. This is one of our favorite museums with its extensive NW First Nations collection. They also had a special exhibition about the gold rush in British Columbia. To see a real gold bar and the biggest (and first) nugget found in BC was impressive.

We left the harbour about 2 PM and headed up island a ways to Tsehum Harbour where we stayed in a reciprocal moorage slip at the North Sannich Yacht Club. The fairway into the yacht club was a bit “dicey” in our thinking coming in with only 2.5 ft of water under the keel in a couple of places so with a very low morning tide we decided hanging around and waiting for the water to return would be prudent. We were able to catch a municipal bus to Bucharth Gardens where we enjoyed the flowers and



lunch.

When we returned to the boat there was much more room under the keel and we headed back into the United States and passed through customs in Roche Harbor about 5 PM. From Roche Harbor we motored around the island and spent the night on the breakwater at Friday Harbor. This morning we left at about 5:30 AM so that we could catch the slack through Deception Pass and thereby take the shorter inside route to Everett down Sarasota Passage. The water across from Cattle Pass to Deception

Pass presented a great example of how messy it can get when two tidal streams from differing directions meet and argue with each other as to whose water has priority. In other words the waves were up to 4 ft tall and with very short periods which made the running very rough even though we were in “protected” waters (they also sent my coffee cup flying across the pilot house floor which created quite a mess).

At about 2:30 PM we backed into our slip in Everett very smoothly and with a lot more confidence after despite a strong cross wind and a bit of a current.

Looking back we both agree it was a wonderful vacation and we are ready for more.

So what have we learned:

- The boat is ready to go – the few minor things we need to do are pretty cosmetic with the exception of changing hoses on the wing engine (and hopefully figuring out why it is hard to start) and refurbishing the hydraulics on the Niad stabilizers.
- We were able to handle the boat in really cruddy ocean conditions without problem other than Norman’s mild nausea.
- We are now comfortable that we know how to use the paravanes and that they are ready to go if our hydraulic system fails.
- Norman learned (confirmed) that he does better with a goal in mind rather than “just wandering about” – even if the goal includes general exploring, it helps us to have a plan in the background.
- Norman learned (confirmed) that he does much better with social contact – I now think that replacing the single side band radio is a higher priority than in the past.
- Our fuel usage is what we were told to expect but we now believe it – this boat goes a long way on a load of fuel. (As we are very near the end of our trip we have used 185 US gallons over 508 miles = 2.74 miles per gallon including generator and furnace usage)
- The boat really can operate independently. At anchor on a sunny day the solar panels are nearly up to the task of maintaining the baseline battery use. We can make water, stay warm, wash cloths, eat stored food, etc.. (We have been hooked to shore power only once and that was a convenience that came with using reciprocal moorage – we used the opportunity to catch up on laundry.)

Epilogue: If anyone is wondering, an x-ray showed a broken bone in my hand leading to a cast making typing difficult and thus the delay in posting part 2.

Norman