

## First “Big” Trip

For at least 6 months since we were both able confirm with our employers that we would be able to get 3 weeks off we have been looking forward to taking Salish Aire out onto the ocean – more for our learning than hers. Living in the Pacific Northwest we have an abundance of cruising options and our initial plan was to try to do a clockwise circumnavigation of Vancouver Island in British Columbia. When we put this idea out on the Nordhavn 46 list-serve the response was a universal “not enough time – just plan to take the time enjoying the west coast of the island”. So we are off with the plan of exploring the wild coast of Vancouver Island.

We have a number of goals with the trip on our self-teaching agenda including:

- Confirm that all of the boat’s systems are working correctly (including systems we have never tried including the water maker and paravanes)
- Confirm that we are “OK” with being off shore – we don’t plan any extended passages but the ocean is a different thing than our protected home waters. On one hand the trip will require off-shore travel but with the safety of knowing that there is always a snug harbor within reach and further that we can always wait in a protected anchorage for the weather to become “agreeable”.
- Practice full day passage making (no overnight runs planned but we do expect to have to operate the boat for up to 16 hours without landing.
- See how Jarvis does without access to shore several times a day.
- Norman needs to learn to enjoy his current “home” rather than always being impatient to move on. We plan to anchor the boat for several days at a time and use the dingy, kayaks, and bicycles to explore.

Today is Sunday and we are well on our way after leaving Friday morning.

## Friday June 26

We were asked some time back by my choir director if we could help house a couple of young boys from the Land of Lakes Boys Choir. Recognizing that sleeping on a boat would likely be a pretty cool thing to young boys from Minnesota we agreed to take 2 kids Thursday night. They were great kids and had a ball checking out the boat, playing with Jarvis and learning to play Mill Bornes with Clarice.

Clarice took them up to the church while I finished final preparation details and we were underway by 9:30 AM. The day was hot and sunny and we had a pleasant run up to our first anchorage in Cornet Bay on Whidbey Island. We paddled with Jarvis over to Deception Pass State Park and took a long walk before we paddled back to Salish Aire and settled in for the night.

## Saturday June 27

Since we have no control over the moon and the tides it commands we needed to be up early to catch the 7 AM slack water through Deception Pass (we actually arrived about 45 minutes early and had a fun ride on the last of the outbound tide). After Deception Pass we had a near straight run to Victoria

Harbour. This was a planned stop as the USA and Canada seem to be having a childish food fight at the moment with the USA claiming that Canadian beef might be tainted and the Canadians retaliating by refusing to allow raw poultry into the country. We figured rather than argue with the customs folks we would just go to the grocery store in Victoria for eggs, chicken and fresh veggies. Customs was a very painless process (once we found the new customs dock) with a call-in by Clarice and very few questions.

We actually arrived in Victoria much earlier than planned so we only spent one night there. We were able to try out our new electric assist bicycles as a method of checking out a port area. They were great and we were able to explore areas of Victoria we had never seen before including the beaches along the Strait of Juan de Fuca and ride through a neighborhood of grand old mansions.

Sunday June 28

We are nearing Bamfield Inlet as I write with about 2 hours left to travel. My math and our navigation computer both agreed last night that if we wanted to reach Bamfield with plenty of daylight in case something went wrong (or better yet, to settle into the anchorage and go ashore before nightfall) then we needed to leave Victoria at 4 AM. My thought was that if we needed to travel in the dark, we would be much more comfortable in relatively known waters than trying to enter a port we've never been to from an ocean we have travelled on only twice before. The alarm went off at 3:30 AM and we were underway and exiting Victoria Harbour just as the sky was lightening. At about 4:30 we had an amazing sunrise to start the day on near mirror water conditions.





The tide cooperated and gave us up to a 2.5 knot increase in speed and we saw some minke whales near us.



Since we both grew up in Washington State, we have always heard the tales of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and how the entrance can challenge any ship on a bad day. I know this caused me a fair amount of trepidation but the only way to overcome the anxiety of the unknown is to see if it is true. Our goal was Bamfield but there was one port option on the Canadian side of the Strait we considered as a stopping point if we needed to wait out the weather. The Strait did show us that it can be interesting even on a good day with 8 foot swells and 15 knot winds. This was on top of poor sleep (not only having to get up early but Jarvis kept alerting us to the sounds of a wharf he wasn't used too). I foolishly added trying to do a project requiring close up work and ended up with a pretty swirly tummy. Some ginger candy and concentrating on looking out of the windows seems to have gotten me through the day and I expect to be ready for dinner once we anchor. The other thing that helped a great deal was to move closer to shore. We both agreed that the small fishing boats we could watch through the binoculars seems to be having a much easier time in near shore than we were out about 3 miles. Once we moved in the wave

action eased and the coast itself became so picturesque with lots of sea caves that I forgot to feel sick.



We are now on the Pacific Ocean proper about 1.5 miles from shore and things are much calmer. The waves are also primarily hitting us on the beam so that our hydraulic stabilizers can be much more effective. With our turn point into Barkley Sound and Bamfield in sight at 4 PM, we now know that we can do a moderately long stretch and that I am somewhat susceptible to sea sickness but with a little bit of care can tolerate it. Oh, and Jarvis has just slept most of the day.

Tuesday June 30

Entering Bamfield we passed Penguin a sister ship Nordhavn 46 moored in the inlet. Shortly after we anchored they hailed us on the VHF radio and we agreed to sit and chat at some point. They related that they had been following our blog and ups and down on the Nordhavn listserve and we had been alerted by the salesman who brokered our boat deal to make sure we made contact with Penguin's owners at some point.

We were able to anchor in about 35 feet of water with no problem despite a short lived wind squall passing through. Our very "oversized" anchor has set with a minimum of hassle every time we have used it. We ended up in front of one of the many fishing lodges that seem to make up the main businesses of Bamfield.

Bamfield is a town with two halves split by Bamfield Inlet. The East half is reachable by a very long (I've read) dirt road but to get to the west half you have to jump a boat and cross the inlet where you might have a motor vehicle waiting or plan to walk. The West half is known for the boardwalk that joins most of the homes and businesses. It ends at the Canadian Coast Guard station near the entrance to the inlet. Walking across the peninsula from the inlet back to Barkley Sound puts you on Brady's Beach. This is as nice a place as I've been on the coast in this part of the world. The beach is really a series of sand beaches separated by sea stacks and mini islands. Clarice and I just marveled at the scenery while Jarvis went wild running as fast as his little legs were able across the sand and then going up to the top of the beach to sniff the flotsam and the adjoining forest. We also went to the Bamfield Marine Sciences Center in East Bamfield. The campus is huge with a number of BC universities listed as participating in the facility. My interest was in the history of the current lab building. I had read that it

was originally the terminus of the first Trans-Pacific telegraph cable. The did have a very interesting display which explained that the 4000 mile cable was a major challenge as the signals were extremely distorted before they arrived at the other end. The bottom line was that reading early long-distance telegraph signals was very much an art as well as science. We also took a dingy ride around the inlet and found that it is really part of a series of tiny bays and islands that make for a lot of fun exploring.

This morning we sat and had a great talk with the owners of Penguin. They have lived aboard for 7 years so they had a lot of hints to send our way. Penguin was built in 2001 and is one of the last of the N46 line so it was fun to see the improvements that were made before Nordhavn moved on from these phenomenal boats. They also gave us a number of hints about launching paravanes so I believe we now know what we need to know to take a shot at putting them to use.



When we arrived at our new anchorage we also finally broke down and braved trying to bring the water maker to life. Frankly, neither of us expected it had survived having sat for at least the year we have owned the boat and we expect much longer. We fully expected to use our tank water judiciously and fill up at the various towns along the way once we confirmed that our all-important membranes were non-functional. The saga started with identifying components and figuring out what went where. Then we cleaned the sea water strainers (in one, the stainless mesh's seam had come apart so it is now hand sewn together). Next we cleaned the reusable pre-filters which smelled like a well rotted clam bed. Finally we replaced the remaining pre and post membrane filters with new filters that came with the boat. Finally we ran about 6 gallons of fresh water through the system to clean any "pickling" chemicals out. So after using about 20 gallons of our fresh water supply we were ready to see what happened and in short order we were making about 25 gallons / hour of fresh water!! We did learn we have a couple of minor leaks and that it's hard to fill a water tank at the rate of 25 gallons / hour when somewhere along the line you kicked open the bow fresh water faucet and didn't realize it was running like a geyser. After running the VERY NOISY water maker for an hour, doing 2 loads of cloths, cleaning the filers and flushing the system, and leaving the faucet running we went from a tank with 150 gallons to a the same tank with 100 gallons. Oh well, at least we now know we have the ability to fill the tank without tapping a shore supply.

We are now sitting at an idyllic anchorage within the Broken Island Group in Barkley sound under a full



moon.

July 3 Friday

It's the pits to think we have already used a week of our precious vacation time!

After leaving our anchorage in the Broken Islands we headed to Ucluelet which hides behind a peninsula at the north edge of Barkley Sound. We were able to anchor just outside of the entrance to the public marina so we had easy dingy access but were able to stay at no cost. Our hope was to get in on some Canada Day festivities but it turned out that other than a small street fair there wasn't much.

Clarice had pushed hard for folding small size electric assist bicycles. Much to our pleasure we were able to find a model that is sturdy enough to handle my weight and rugged enough to handle gravel and potholes. We folded them up and squeezed both bikes and ourselves into the dingy and headed to the marina. We the extra mobility of the bikes we were able to ride to the end of the peninsula and still have energy to walk a loop of the Wild Pacific Trail. The short loop we walked gave us some great views of the rugged shoreline and a close-up view of a lighthouse. We also picked up some fresh veggies and other supplies at the only large market to our knowledge on the West Side.

We also spent part of the day putting together the pieces of the paravane system that were scattered here and there throughout the boat. Just before we went to bed we confirmed that we knew how to launch one "fish" and had it assembled correctly (we hoped!).

July 2<sup>nd</sup> we headed off shore with the plan of running 44 nautical miles directly to Hot Springs Cove. While it feels like we should have been heading north the compass said we were heading west directly into the swell from the Pacific Ocean. On top of that there was up to 20 knots of wind blowing off our bow which added to the turmoil of the water. We are pure novices but would say that we had up to a 6 foot swell mixed with up to 5 ft wind waves at varied angles and periods. Summary: It felt pretty like a pretty snarky day as we travelled from 10 AM to 5:30 PM. Even with the paravanes out it was an





uncomfortable ride in our minds.

Today I confirmed with a couple of the tour boat operators that run daily from Tofino to Hot Springs Cove that “it was really ugly” which made me feel like we had taken on some pretty rough water and made it through without any significant problems. The boat handled it without a complaint, Clarice was fine, Jarvis and I laid down on a pad on the salon floor and tried to nap to allow our challenged digestive systems a chance to settle down. (Note to self: Bring anti-seasickness medication next trip for tender tummy self.)

Finally we anchored in Hot Springs Cove which is very protected and thus completely calm.



Jarvis and I quickly jumped in a kayak and headed to the Provincial Park Dock and terra firma. We took a minute to check out the newest addition to the park in the way of the fishing trawler Alisa which has been converted to a café by its owners as they try to establish a “retirement” business having fought for a couple of years to get through the permitting process in order to permanently attach themselves to the park dock as a vendor.



It wasn't long before the last tour boat had left and the final float plane had pulled itself into the air and calm returned to our anchorage. Clarice made up a filling dinner and we were ready to recall why we had worked so hard to get here.

Several years back we came into Hot Springs Cove in our 25 ft trawler (we had towed it over the top of Vancouver Island and launched in a fiord that drains into Barkley Sound). We really didn't know what was here but it quickly became one of our very favorite places we have ever visited. From the park dock a boardwalk leads off through the forest for about 2 km to the hot springs. The forest is as lovely a place as can be found in this part of the world. One expects the wee people of Irish legend to pop out of a



moss covered root cave at any moment.





Once you have passed through this Zen of all Zen places you reach the very hot water that runs from a crack in the earth and over a falls into pools at the edge of the sea. The rocks themselves cool the water somewhat as does the tidal wash coming back up into the steep walled fault so that everyone can find a temperature to their liking.



While the park is overwhelmed with tour groups that come in by fast boat or float plane from Tofino during the day, in the morning and evening it belongs to those who stay the night.

Another fun thing about the boardwalk is that the Park Service has allowed a long time tradition to continue of carving your boat name or other note of importance into the planks. There are school groups from Calgary that have noted annual trips to the West Coast, there are many boat names carved with anything from a pocket knife to a water gun. We wonder if Clara Richardson



ever accepted the marriage proposal carved into a plank. Perhaps her suitor hoped that a night in the floating B&B in the cove would live up to its name of InnChanter.



. Or perhaps the story ended like another carving; "Bye Susan"...



To keep the tradition alive we carefully carved Salish Aire's name into a plank provided to us by the Park Attendant who promised to use it in place of a failing plank the next time he changed one out



So ends another day in paradise.

Monday July 6, 2015

Saturday we took a side trip mentioned in the guide books and suggested by the owner of the Alisa Trawler (AKA floating restaurant) to look for Cougar Annie's Gardens in Hesquiat Harbour. The story goes that Annie was quite a gardener and to work her homestead she imported any plant she could find to see if it would grow. Bottom line is we never found the access trail. The trip was enjoyable in any

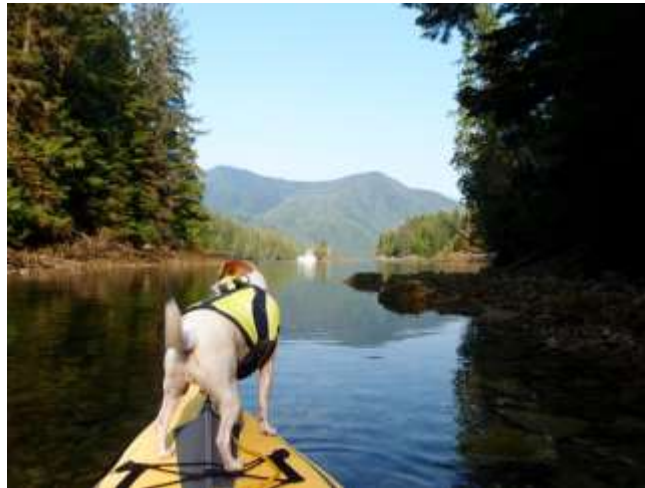
case and we got to see our first black bear on the beach for this trip and the first sea otter we have ever



seen in the wild!

The bad news was that Clarice managed to cut two of her toes quite deeply walking in the boat (we still haven't figured out what she cut them on!) Our biggest concern is that the cuts are in a bad spot for infection but they are doing well so far. She is hobbling around a bit and frustrated that she shouldn't go swimming.

After our side trip we spent our final night in Hot Springs Cove and then started our exploration of Clayoquot Sound. Last night we anchored in Young Bay where we were completely sheltered in our private little "lake" with no one else in sight. We enjoyed the quiet serenity by kayaking around and checking out the shoreline. Clarice noticed a pebble covered beach on the way in so landed there and relaxed for a spell while Jarvis explored and chased waves (he thinks that running up and down the beach barking at waves is the best game in the world). Speaking of Jarvis, he has become quite adapted



to the dingy and my kayak.

As soon as we get our life jackets on he is waiting at the door to get aboard. He has decided that he is the captain on my kayak and now patrols the front deck rather than sit between my legs. As expected today he finally lost his footing and went overboard. After he paddled back and I lifted him back on with his lifejacket, he went straight back to the bow as if he hadn't learned a thing (after giving me a salt water shower).

Today we are just checking out the scenery. This is new for us as in the past we always had to be attentive to fuel. So far we have barely used 100 gallons of our 600 gallons we started with. We can't believe how efficient this boat is!

So we are traveling at idle speed in the little crooks and crannies of Sydney inlet of Clayoquot Sound while Clarice tries her hand at trolling for fish.

Wednesday July 8, 2015

Last night we spent anchored in Matilda Inlet after spending most of the day trolling for fish (continue to be skunked) using the wing engine. We also ran the generator to top off batteries and add water to our fresh water tank. We believe that running the main engine at idle speed is below the generating threshold of the 160 Amp engine alternator and we have had a couple of days of low clouds so our main battery bank was getting low enough that we switched to our backup bank for a night.

Going into Matilda Inlet we docked at Ahousat Store, Café, and Lodging for lunch. We have often been disappointed when we are served pressed burgers and frozen fish patties in the out of the way café's so I asked if the fish was fresh to which she held up her gloved hands and indicated she was cutting it up when we rang the bell. She served me three THICK pieces of halibut with fresh cut fries and Clarice had homemade soup and a BLT. Great lunch!

When the tide came in we were able to take the dingy to a reported "warm" springs pool at the edge of the bay. The water was clear with only a slight sulfur smell and the concrete pool was about 4 ft deep. It looked very inviting until I felt the water and decided a better description was "not cold" rather than



warm. We did take the trail from the springs about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to a sandy beach on the outside of the island. The trail led through a lot of bogs and Jarvis was covered with mud up to his belly by the time we reached the beach.



The beach itself was delightful and Jarvis ran his little legs off, dug in the sand, and barked at waves. He considers out of the way beaches to be his private playgrounds and has us laughing at his antics whenever we take him to one.



On the way back through the woods we noted some pretty large tracks in the mud and were concerned that a cougar might be using the same route so to his chagrin Jarvis had to wear his halter and leash to make sure we could haul him in if he decided to take on a “big kitty”.

I was sweaty enough after the trek back through the forest trail that I decided to get into the springs for a quick dip. About a week before we left on the trip I had taken a dive directly over the handlebars of my bicycle. I ended up with some road rash on my chin and nose (thanks to the rim of my helmet keeping my face from really getting messed up) and a very sore right hand. Since the hand doesn't have classic signs of a broken bone or torn tendon, I have not seen a doctor about it and in general it seemed to be getting better over time but has remained a bother when I put pressure on it the wrong way. Getting out of the springs apparently exacerbated the injury dramatically and it hurt like crazy last evening until ice and ibuprofen kicked in. Moral of the story is that we are heading to Tofino this morning and hoping to get a brace for it at the very least and possibly have it evaluated at the Tofino clinic.