

Alaska 2016

Part One GOING NORTH

Canada through British Columbia to the Yukon





Alaska 2016 Travel Journal Part One "Going North"

1 Date: June 07, 2016

Getting Ready

June 6, 2016 – In one week we will be heading north to Alaska in "Tatanka," (the Sioux word for Bison) our 27 foot Winnebago Vista Motorhome. It was the smallest one we could find that had everything we wanted. Large windows and a bed we don't need to climb into. For the last month we have been planning, packing and preparing our "tiny home."

Les has been customizing our home with a wooden drink holder for the driver, and a drink/map/travel book holder for the navigator and phone holder in the front cab. But the best thing is he built a new computer desk for the front deck complete with mouse pad holder. This is so I can use the computer to navigate... **Jm-a**



or

2 Date: June 13, 2016

Time: 10:56

Mileage: 35930-

Location: Minden

On the Road Again!

Ok Just posted my first Journal on our Blog "Return 2 Alaska", I used my Iphone App to do it, so this isn't the wording I used but it will do. I also only picked Family (Jimmy, April, Robert, and Nancy) to send notice to. We were planning to leave around 9:30 so 10:56 isn't bad.

Jm-a

2a Date: June 13, 2016

Time: 1:20

Location: Dayton

Lunch

We stopped at Dayton State Park to let Sam pee...Looked rather nice. Good for an evening get-away. Had lunch Hawaiian BBQ, in Smith's Parking lot also Starbucks is there! **Jm-a**

2b Date: June 13, 2016

Time: 2:20

Location: Fernley, NV

Not a good start.

Les and I think the motorhome is driving a little squirrely. Les thinks he may have over filled the tires so we stop to check. The front valve stem stays open... we now have flat tire. Luckily we stop in Fernley and Les is able to go to tire store and get new one. Hope this is just shake down issue and not harbinger of things to come. **Jm-a**

3 Date: June 13, 2016

Time: 5:40

Mileage: 36,089

Location: Rye Patch Recreation Area

First night – Turkey greeting

We stopped just north of Lovelock, NV at a Nevada State Recreation Area that we found last time we came thru the area. We cruised the campground below the dam for a campsite. A lot of sites were available. Site 11 looked open, levelish and in the trees. No hook ups, but we knew that already. I stopped and got out, only to be greeted by the campground host. Well not really, but it was one rather bodacious wild turkey. We saw a flock of turkeys last time we were here, but this one was solitary and walked right up to within 4 feet and looked me over. **LDA**



3a Date: June 13, 2016

Time: 8:30

Mileage: 36,089

Location: Rye Patch Recreation Area

First Sunset

When we started this trip... I asked Les to help me get minimum of 30 minutes of walking per day so after dinner we took a walk at sunset...met my goal and had a very nice time.

Jm-a



Time: 5:47

Mileage: 36,392

Location: Boise

A Little Late in Boise

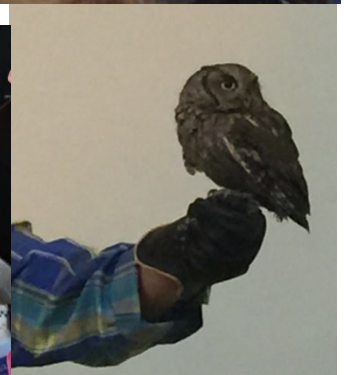
We stopped in Boise for two reasons. One to have Les Schwab replace our tires (new ones are just not working) and to use a credit we had at a local sporting goods store. Last time Les was here he bought me a nice jacket, but it didn't fit... Sent it back but they would only give him a store credit.

Les Schwab has to order the tires, so we will be changing tires in Missoula MT. And we were just a little late for sporting goods store, they just went out of business. Oh well, you snooze you lose.

For people like me who like to take walks this Park is perfect it is right on the river with a 27 mile bicycle trail. The park rents bikes! The park itself seems clean. Biggest negative is the space between rigs. We have an "electric/water" back-in site. It is short even for our 27' rig and our awning almost hit's the neighbors rig.

This afternoon, we visited the World Center for Birds of Prey. They are helping to save several Birds of Prey from extinction. Since the Peregrine Falcon was de-listed, they have been focusing on the California condor. They have 20 individuals in their breeding program and have been releasing the young at the Grand Canyon. While at the center, we saw a live program featuring "Winston" a Western Screech Owl.

After that we ate dinner at Tuconos Brazilian Bar-B-Que. A variety of meats and vegetables are carved off the skewer on to your plate. They keep bringing you more selections as long as the big Red, Yellow and Green dowel is Green end up.



5 Date: June 16, 2016

Time: 4:00

Mileage: Not known

Location: Wilderness Gateway
Campground

No Frisbee Allowed



Not much to say... We traveled north on twisty mountain roads along rivers through Idaho. Nice views. Raining lightly all day. Each time we stopped for a little walk, it rained harder.

Stopped for the night at very nice Forrest Service Campground called Gateway to Wilderness off of US 12. A group of kayakers, are playing Frisbee in front of our site...I won't let Les join in! (that's how he broke his leg)

Jm-a



6 Date: June 17, 2016

Time: 2:22 PM

Mileage: 36,917

Location: Missoula, MT

New Tires

We arrived this morning in Missoula. Went straight to the Les Schwab dealer that order the new Michelin tires for us they swapped out the Michelins for the Toyos, again no questions asked, no quibbling. All they asked for was the difference in the price, which we felt was more than fair. Driving to the RV park in Missoula was now a pleasure. The Michelins drive straight and true.

7 Date: June 18, 2016

Time: 2:22 PM

Mileage: 36,917

Location: Missoula, MT

Waiting at Missoula

"international airport"

I am sitting in the cell phone waiting lot at the Missoula Airport. Waiting for my high school friend Sue to fly in so we can have our annual wild women week in Kalispell, MT this week. We arrived yesterday and had



our tires replaced on the motorhome. Les says it drives much better! Not so squirrely on freeway speeds. Spent the night at one of the nicest RV parks we been at a long time. Jim & Mary's RV Resort, it's just northwest of town on the road to Kalispell. They had flowers everywhere and the space between rigs that invited you to sit outside. Few RV parks and even public campgrounds now days have enough space between sites. We took a nice walk with the dog this am on little country road next to park and railroad tracks. **jm-a**

7b Date: June 18, 2016

Time: 8:49 PM

Mileage: 36,870

Location: Kalispell, MT

Beginning a week in Kalispell

Jill picked up Sue Larson at the Missoula Airport about noon. Then we headed up the road for Kalispell. We parked the RV in "Spruce Park on the River." The site faces the Flathead River about 50' away and the current looks very strong.

We took Jill and Sue over to Christy Goodlett's house. It is very nice and the back yard backs into a very beautiful natural pond. We spent the afternoon watching a great variety of birds coming into the bird feeder, including a flicker, redwing blackbirds, brown-headed cow birds, mourning doves, and Mallards with ducklings etc. Across the pond we saw a belted kingfisher and a raccoon.



Jill and her high school friends will spend the next week pampering themselves and reconnecting. I will explore the area including Glacier National Park. I hope to get a bunch of large format photos of beautiful scenery. **LDA**

8 Date: June 19, 2016

Time: 9:02 pm

Mileage: 36,870

Location: Kalispell, MT

Glacier NP Recon

Today I drove through Glacier National Park to get an idea for photo opportunities and the time of day the photos should be taken. The clouds were too heavy today for trying to take large format photos, so I took digital photos instead. I drove



through the middle of the park and out the east gate. Then I looped back to Kalispell by following the boundary road to the south of the park.

LDA

9 Date: 6/20/2016

Location: **Glacier National Park**

Going to the Sun with The Wild women

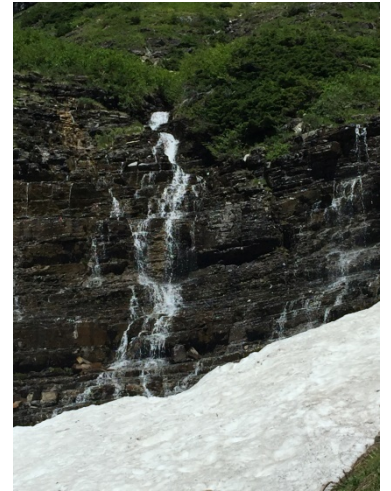
So my week with 6 high school friend started out sadly. Linn one of my friends had to rush home to Seattle Area when her husband was sent to the hospital with heart problems. He still having tests done but so far so good.

Our first day out with everyone else and we did a loop around south half of Glacier National Park. This included the "Going to the Sun" road. This road not only has great views but it's a little scary, especially for people sitting on the cliff side of the road. I was driving the rental car so I just had to watch all the traffic! It was a glorious day weather wise.

The Wild women are getting a little less wild over time. Instead of rafting down rivers we are searching for the best Huckleberry Pie! The search took us into the Historical East Glacier Inn. Magnificent! Everything today was magnificent.

Jm-a





Time: 10:00 pm

Mileage: 36,900

Location: Glacier National Park

Glacier National Park – Beyond Polebridge

Yesterday, I worked in the motorhome all day, so naturally it was w beautiful sunny day. Today, I moved the motorhome into the park to Fish Creek Campground so I would be about 30 miles closer to everything in the park. It also does not hurt that cost is only about \$11 a night with the Senior Pass. And surprise, surprise!!!! I have cellular service at the campsite.

Road to Kintla Lake About 2:00 pm I thought I would recon the Inside North Fork Road leading up the west side of the park to Kintla Lake, or so the official park map shows. This is a one lane dirt road. I got a mile up the road when I saw a sign stating the road is closed 6.3 miles ahead at Camas Creek. I continued on, just to see the country. The road was fun, but it had two way traffic (about 4 other vehicles). For me, in the little Tracker, it was no problem tucking out of the way for others to pass. But I was following someone that did not appear to be experienced with dirt roads and he kept his speed to 15 MPH (posted 20 MPH). Since his vehicle was much larger, passing was difficult. I followed him almost to the end and he pulled into a parking spot. I found Camas Creek and the cable across the road about a half mile later. The road beyond looked to have very little use. So I turned around and headed back to the campground. Of course I caught up with the same guy I was following before, so it was a slow run back.

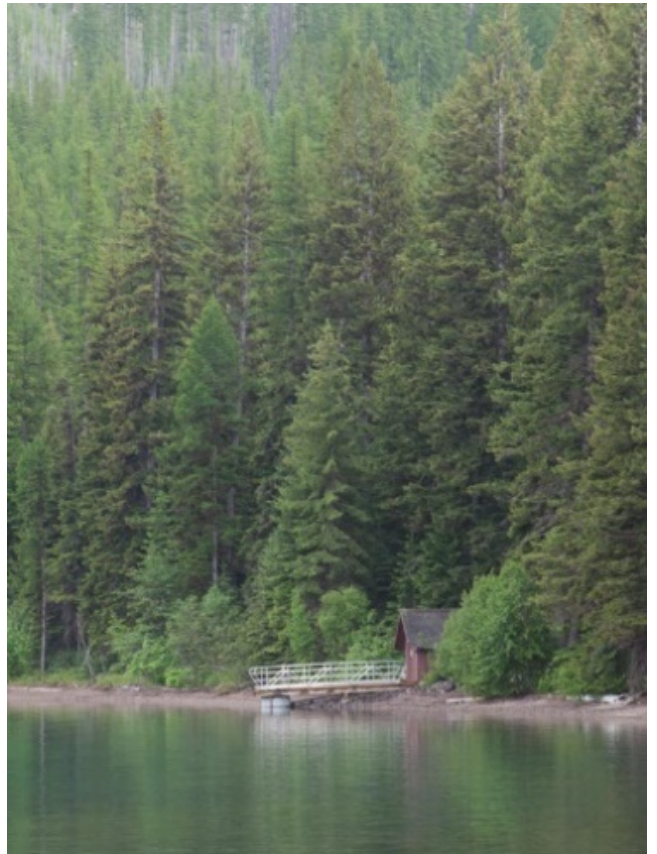


When I got back to the campground, I asked the fee collector about the road. She said that it kept washing out so the Park Service has given up on maintaining it. As it turns out there is a by-pass, the Outside North Fork Road and at Polebridge, you can cross the river and get back on the Inside North Fork Road and go to Kintla Lake.

So about 6:00 pm, I got gas in the Tracker and headed for Kintla Lake on the Outside North Fork Road. Getting to Polebridge was not bad. It was mostly dirt and 2 full lanes wide, with a paved stretch when is passed through a number of private parcels. After crossing the river at Polebridge, the road became one lane wide and had lots of potholes. It had been graveled years ago and in places needed more. The turn off for

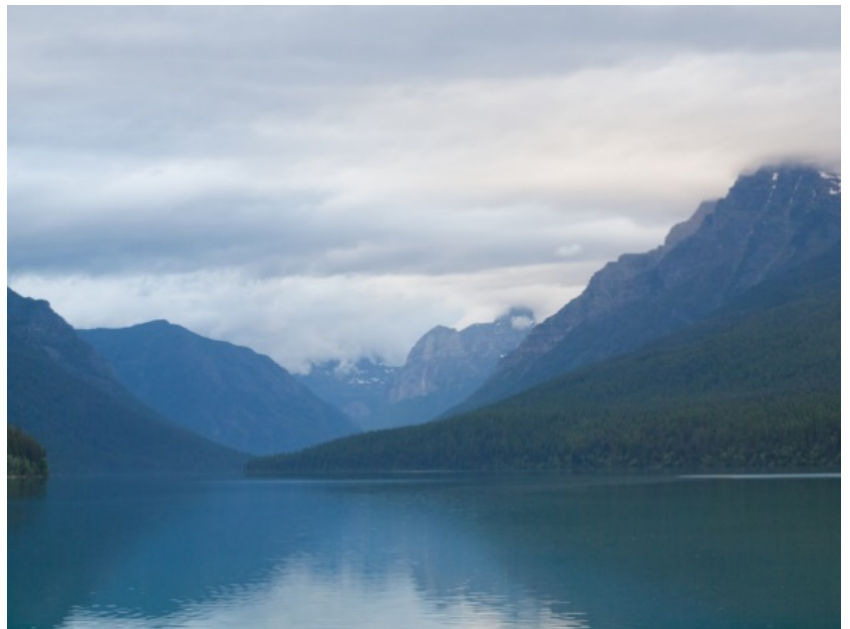
Bowman Lake was only about a mile out of Polebridge and since the clouds were hanging low overhead, I opted to continue on to Kintla Lake in the hopes the clouds would lift.

Kintla Lake was another 15 miles up the road and the road conditions did not improve, but the traffic was light and the scenery great. I got to Kintla Lake about 7:30 pm and the clouds were still hanging low, although it look like it might break, as there were occasional shafts of sun light that would peek through. At the end of the road, is a small campground that appeared to be full. It seems to be popular with back backers and boaters (one man crafts). While I waited for the light to get better, I watched a kayak/fisherman come to shore from somewhere way up lake. As the light never got better, I decided to shoot some digital photo in the hopes that I could improve them on the computer.



I started back for Bowman Lake about 7:50 pm and arrived about 9:00 pm. The light had not improved there either. In fact, I think it may have been worse. I shot a couple of digital photos from the boat ramp, as there was no parking near the shore and again the campground at the *end of the road may have also been full*. I left a few minutes after arriving and headed for Fish Creek Campground. I got back to the motorhome at 10:00 pm.

LDA



Bowman Lake

10a Date: 6/21/2016

Location: Lakeside

Met a Moose

Ok it wasn't a real moose but we had fun posing in front of it. Today the Wild women went shopping in little towns. Purchased a quilt hanging for the RV bedroom. **Jm-a**



10b Date: 6/21/2016

Location: Lakeside

Second Place!

We ate at Tamarack Brewery tonight. We came in second in the trivia contest. Wow being older is good for something. We won Beer! **Jm-a**



Time: 3:00 pm

Mileage: 36,900

Location: Glacier National Park

**Glacier National Park –
East to West**

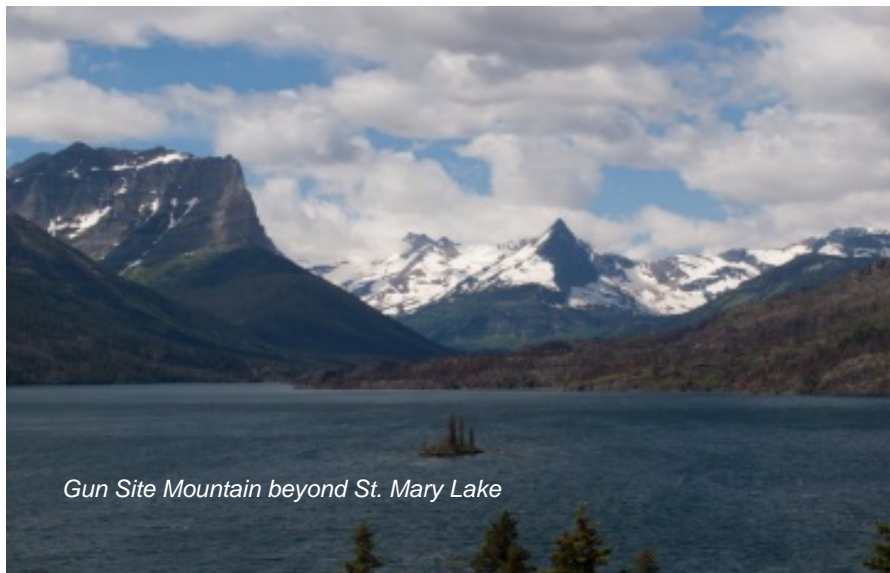
The weather today was supposed to be sunny all day. So I got up at a minute past sunrise (6:58 am), fed the dog and cat and packed a few munchies for the road. Sam and I took Highway 2 along the south boundary of the park and got to Two Medicine Lake around 7:30 am.

There weather was indeed mostly clear with a few small clouds hanging around the peaks. These clouds I like because they make the sky interesting, helps to set a mood for the photographs



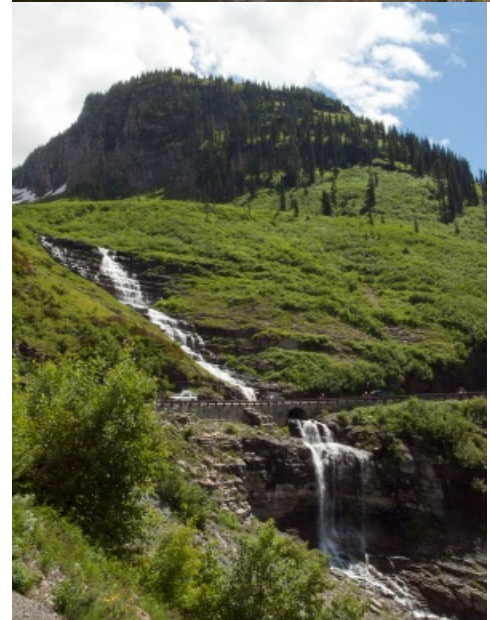
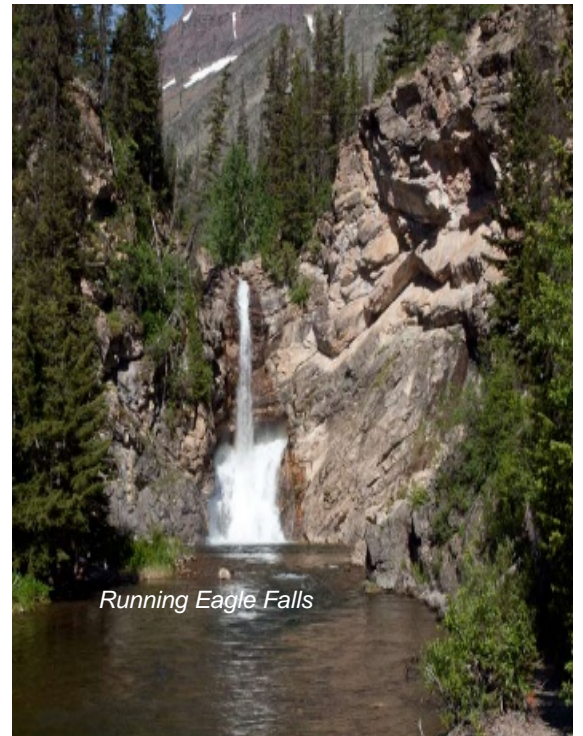
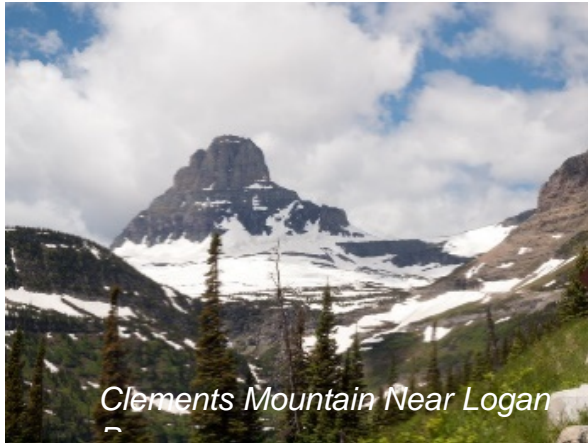
I had to track out of the park to a small dirt road that lead down to the shore of Lower Two Medicine Lake. The lake was fairly still and the reflection of Rising Wolf Mountain was pretty good. I finally was had the good light I have been looking for, so the large format camera saw its first action of the trip. Then it was time to get back up to the paved road. Not an easy drive. Low range 4 wheel drive, two attempts and a lot of

spinning tires, but I finally made it back to the pavement.



I took several shots at Two Medicine Lake of the peaks to the west and then stopped at Running Eagle Falls for a few more photos. This was a very unusual waterfall as most of the water came out of the cliff half way down, while some fell from the top.

Going north brought me to St. Mary and back into the park. Lots of photo stops along St. Mary Lake and on to Logan Pass. The parking lot at the pass was full, so I only spent a little time there to eat some munchies. Coming down the face of the cliff from the pass, I only made two photo stops. Since Sam and I were getting tired, we pushed on back to the Motorhome **LDA**



12 Date: 6/23/16

Time: 8:00 pm

Mileage: 36,900

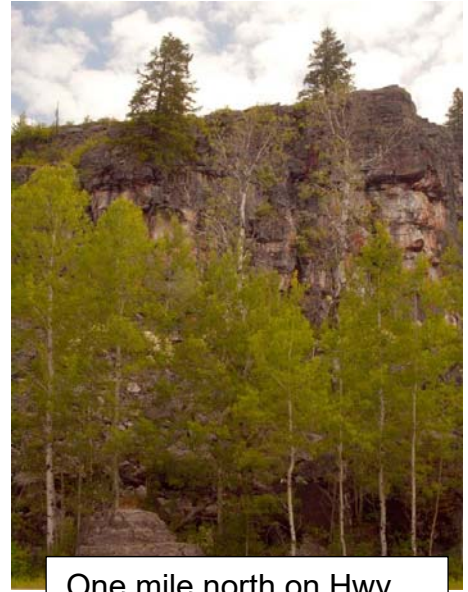
Location: Eureka, MT

Recon up Hwy 93 to Eureka, MT

I felt like I had photographed about all I could in the park and today started out cloudy, so I went outside the park and did a recon run to Eureka, MT about 8 miles from the Canadian border. I was watching for photo ops and when I started back south, I made a couple of stops. There were some interesting rock faces next to the road that drew my attention. **LDA**



Hwy 93 @Stillwater Cove Road



One mile north on Hwy

13 Date: 6/26/2016

Location: Kalispell, MT

Big Fork

Wild women is done for another year. We spa-ed, shopped until we dropped and toured everything. We also saw a live play/musical "Young Frankenstein" at the BigFork playhouse. Very funny and very well acted. They had some very professional actors you never heard of. Of course we ate, ate and ate. Most time the good food was at my friend's home...thank you Christy!

Two of us thought we would help our friend out and put up her dog Spike's kennel. So we talked everyone into the plan. We got it up but then it started to rain...we still had not leveled the site where she wanted it placed. Lucky my wonderful husband came to the Wildwomen rescue and finished the job after the women started leaving for home. Its level (sort of).

Christy learned that she wants a bigger kennel for Spike and never let her loving but pushy Wildwomen near a building project again. Les learned to stay away from those crazy Wildwomen. Jm-a



Location: Fort Steele, MT

Fort Steele

We spent yesterday afternoon 8 miles south of the border making sure that our new SIM card was working and we had our new Canadian phone number up and running. It was supposed to be easy but between Apple, ATT, IRoam and our vacation brains it took us a couple of hours!

So we decided to spend a couple of nights at Fort Steele in a RV park next to the Historical Park. Today Les had a great time photographing lots of old buildings and equipment.



I did the touristy things like watching their little theater show, buying stuff and eating stuff. They really do a nice job of living history and the town is a mix of reproductions and real historic buildings. Some of the building they are allowing to decay and fall down...which of Les loved a lot.

The fact that it stays light longer here is hard to get used to. I took Sam on our daily walk at 10:00 pm!! Met my walking goal and then some today. **Jm-a**



15 Date: 6/28/2016

Location: Radium Hot Springs

Les in Hot Water

So we got up late today and both were tired so only drove a couple of hours and stopped in the town of Radium Hot Springs. I got Les in hot water again at the Hot Springs. We were only going to spend a short time here but they have a spa here and Les didn't get massage last week and he did all that work on Spike's dog kennel so I sacrificed and we both got treatments and a longer soak than planned! Yea! Jma



16 Date: 6/29/2016

Time: 5:30 pm

Mileage: 37221

Location: Kootenay National Park

Into the Canadian Rockies

We left Radium Hot Springs and entered Kootenay National Park, traveling up BC Highway 93. Just past the south entrance, the road passes through a narrow crack in the canyon wall carved by Sinclair Creek. We only drove for a little over an hour and stopped at the largest campground in the park, Marble Canyon Campground.



After setting up the campsite, we headed out to explore the sites we had seen from the road that looked interesting. We took a walk on the trail to Simpson Creek (looked more like a small river to us. This took us through a portion of the Shanks Fire that occurred in 2001. Jill, Sampson and I enjoyed the mostly level hike, be that the day was rather warm, we turned around after a mile.



We have been learning things about our northern neighbor (Canada):

- 1) Their money is quite different than ours.
 - a. They no longer have pennies, so they round up or down the total for the bill to the nearest nickel.
 - b. The lowest denomination of paper currency they have is the Five dollar bill. They have a \$1 coin they call a Loony, because it has a Common Loon on the back. The size and color is similar to our dollar coin. In addition, they have a \$2 coin that is a silver donut with the center of gold alloy. They call this coin a Twony, perhaps because it is a \$2 Loony. This all reminds me of the old cartoon by Looney Tunes.
 - c. Their paper currency isn't exactly paper. It includes portions that are plastic and you can see through it. I was warned not to run the currency through a clothes dryer, as they will melt.
- 2) The Canadian National Parks permit dogs on leash on the trails. This is one of my complaints about the US National Parks, they don't allow dogs on trails.
- 3) The Canadian National Parks have an annual pass, actually it is a two year pass. Like our NPS annual pass it is only good for free entrance to all the Canadian National Parks. Unlike our NPS annual pass it is only good for one person. So Jill got the Adult pass and Les got the Senior Pass (\$10 less).
- 4) The National Parks actually give away free firewood. However, they charge you \$8.80 per day to burn the wood. Go figure! **LDA**



Time: 5:30 pm

Mileage: 37,264

Location: Banff National Park, Mosquito Creek Campground

Rainy Day in the Rockies

We had planned to get up early and drive down to Vermillion Crossing to get a photo of the Peaks there, but we woke up to rain on the roof and thunder on the wind. When we did get up, we found the rain was breaking up, so we headed to Vermillion Crossing late. By the time we got there it was raining again. So we went into the lodge there and had a continental breakfast. After we finished, the rain had broken up and the photo op was starting to get light. So I set up my camera and set the exposure only to



find the clouds moved in again and the light was gone. But I waited it out and finally got the shot.



Heading back toward camp, we stopped to see the Paint Pots. The trail was really nice out to a new bridge over the Vermillion River. On the other side of the river it got swampy. The Paint Pots is an area where a spring brings up iron and other minerals from underground making ochre colored clay that the native people and later white man collected to make paint pigments. Sampson returned with

orange feet and belly and had to be rinsed off in the Vermillion River, before we would let him back in the car.

As we broke camp, another visitor told us that there were no open campsites left in the main part of Banff, or in the Lake Louise area. So we headed up towards Jasper and found a campsite early at Mosquito Creek Campground about 20 miles north of Lake Louise.





site, but found the store and everything else to be very small and only set up for tourist.

Perhaps Jasper will be a real town. Returning to the campground, we ate dinner and watch a continuous stream of campers coming in to only be turned away. We then talked to a park worker who confirmed tomorrow is a Canadian National Holiday, "Canada Day". We decided we should spend several days here, since finding an open came site in Jasper will likely be very difficult. LDA

After setting up camp, we returned to Lake Louise and headed out to Moraine Lake which is in Valley of the Ten Peaks. It is a spectacular place we discovered on a trip here back in the 1980's. That trip was after the summer season and was not crowded. Not the case today! We never found a parking place so we left and made a stop in a pull out up the road to take some pictures. We stopped to do some food shopping at the Lake Louise town



Hanging Glacier

18 Date: 7/1/2016

Time: 2:00 pm

Mileage: 37,264

Location: Banff National Park,
Mosquito Creek Campground

O Canada Day

We got up early this morning and drove back to Moraine Lake. This early (8AM) the parking lot was only half full and the light was great for photography. I took several large format photos while Jill did a water color & pen drawing of Moraine Lake.



Moraine Lake in Valley of the Ten Peaks

As the morning ran on, more and more busloads of people came. Most were Orientals, they smile at Jill's drawing, and make a clapping motion... and Jill would nod thank you. No language barrier there.



Jill also had a talk with a Golden Mantel Ground Squirrel. It come right up to her, inspected her pack, paints and coffee cup. Finally, it jumped up on her sketch book.

We stopped at Lake Louise Village again, for some food and gas. As we left the gas station we were delayed by the Canada Day Parade. Three and a half Mounties led about a half dozen vehicles and local emergency vehicles.



We stopped at Herbert Lake to check out the reflection on the lake of the peaks. The breeze was already disturbing the reflection, so we opted for returning tomorrow morning. We came back to camp and sat out in the lawn chairs in the sun. We ate lunch, Jill read a book and I used our spotting scope to look for Big Horn Sheep and Mountain Goats on the cliffs across the canyon from the camp site. No Sheep or Goats, but a nice nap was had by Jill. Afternoon has turned cloudy and rainy. So we are enjoying the view from our motorhome. LDA

Time: 8:00 pm

Mileage: 37,264

Location: Banff National Park, Mosquito Creek Campground

Columbia Ice Field

We started early again to catch a good reflection on Herbert Lake. The breeze had already started by the time we got there but the reflection was still decent.

Next we headed to the Columbia Ice Field on the boundary between Jasper and Banff National Parks. We made a few stops before we got there to take pictures and for Jill to sketch at Athabasca Peak and Glacier.

By the time we got to the Columbia Ice Field the light had gotten bad so we did not take any pictures, perhaps tomorrow.

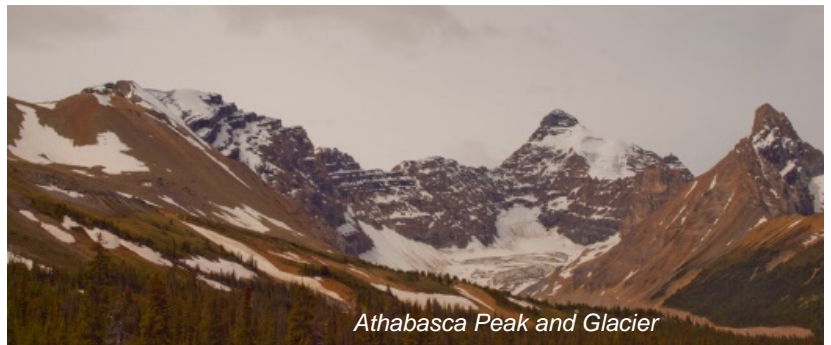
We took a couple of hikes to waterfalls on the way back to camp. The second fall was very twisted water carved canyon called

Mistaya Canyon and it has a small bridge right over the middle of the canyon.

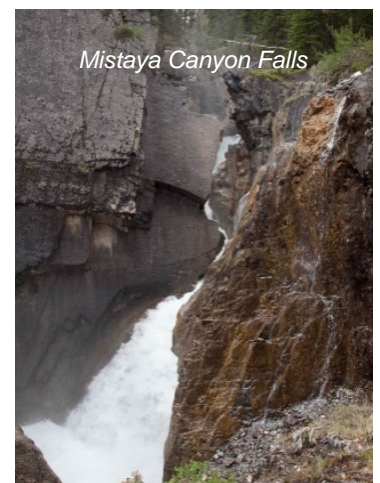
Les wishes he didn't give Jill a Fitbit type of watch thingy for last Christmas. If she doesn't make her step goal for the day then we have to take an evening walk as well as all the little hikes during the day... The walk this evening had great light on the peaks near the campground. Jm-a



Reflection on Herbert Lake



Athabasca Peak and Glacier



Mistaya Canyon Falls



Time: 5:00 pm

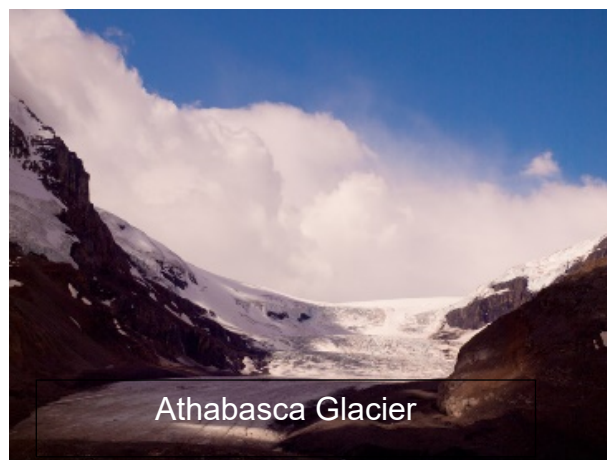
Mileage: 37,390

Location: Whistler's Campground

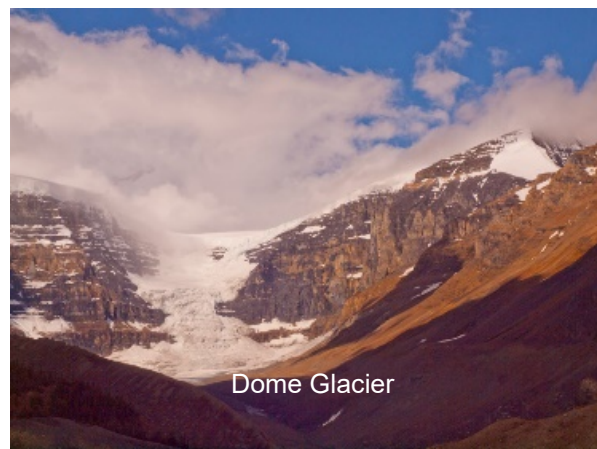
Laundry Day

We got on the road headed to the town of Jasper. Not having Wi-Fi and/or cell service is hard when you want to make reservations for the next night. We tried Saturday at the Ice Field VC to use their WIFI to make reservations but by the time I got their website and signed up, no sites for Sunday were available. Oh well up the road we go ... We again stop at the Columbia Ice Field and this morning we have beautiful broken clouds.

Les takes out his large format Camera and I hold the umbrella just in case. I also take some digital shots. Everyone is going to have to wait for his art. Mine is below.



We dropped in at the "full" campground (Whistler over 700 campsites) and was able to get two campsites. One for tonight and one for tomorrow night. So off to town we go to do laundry. Trouble is we first need cash. All the ATMs in Banff NP didn't liked our American debit cards. Finally at a Bank of Canada, their ATM takes our card! We can get clean! We find this little combination Stationary Store and Laundry? It has Wi-Fi and we get to publish our words of wonder from the past four nights.



Time: 8:00 pm

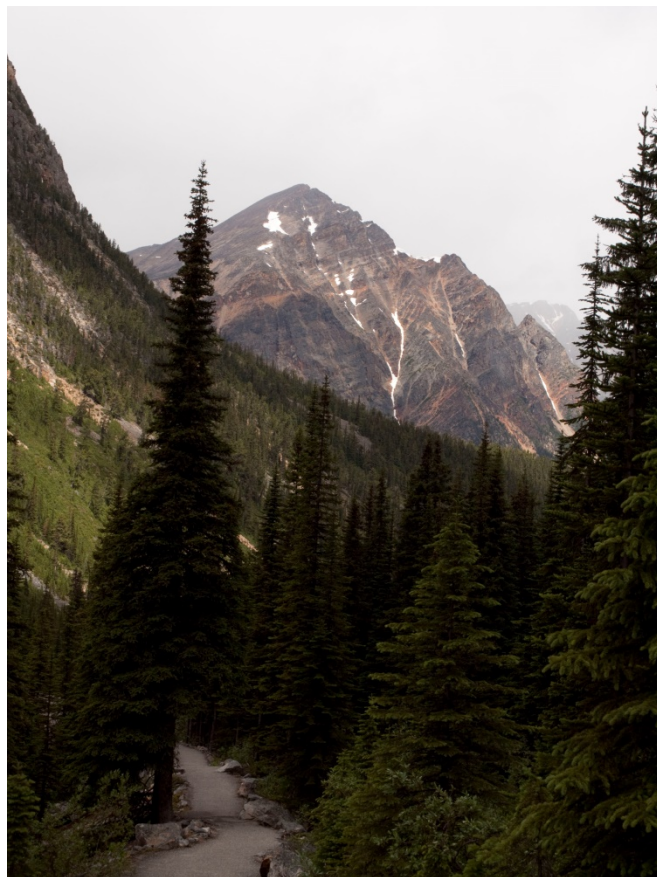
Mileage: 37,390

Location: Whistler's
Campground Jasper

Exploring Jasper

After breakfast, we headed to the small road up to Edith Cavell. At the parking lot at the end of the road we loaded up with camera gear and Sampson on leash and head up the 800 meter trail to the vista. The trail was narrow, paved, steep and already had lots of people. Jill commented that she had to wait for an Oriental family that stopped at least four times to take pictures of the kids with the scenery.

At the vista, you can see the Edith Cavell glacier and a glacier pond below. In 2012 a large portion of the glacier caved off and fell into the pond, prompting the park to close the trail to the pond. The big sign saying CLOSED AREA didn't stop many visitors. There were some family arguments about going to the pond. I lost all the digital photos (except one) that Jill took, but I got two nice Black and White photos. A lot of people were very interested in the large format camera and I let three young people look through it when setting up for the second shot.

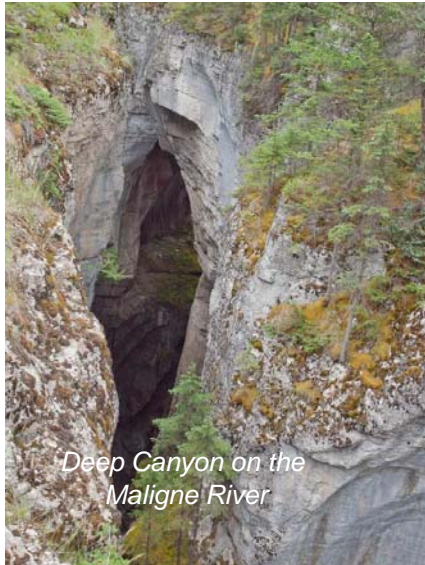


We returned to the campground about a half hour late to move campsites. There was no problem, because we saw the previous occupant of our new campsite leaving as we went in.

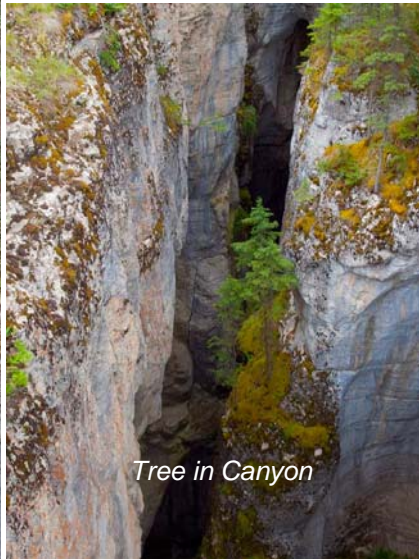
We then headed to town to mail a letter that should have been mailed in Montana. Since this is Canada, we had to go to the Post Office for additional postage. While there, Jill talked to a local about cellular service in town. She found out that there were 3 different providers, but her phone showed No Service. So we found a restaurant with free Wi-Fi and she logged on to iRoam and got an update, which gave her service again.

After lunch, we took the Maligne Road along the Maligne River out to Maligne Lake. Stopped at the parking area for the River. I thought the narrow carved canyon we saw a few days ago at Mistaya River was cool, but this Maligne River has that on beat by miles, literally.

Where the river goes under the road, it looks ordinary, but about a 100 yards downstream, it begins to carve down through the limestone. The trail leads down to the second bridge crossing the canyon now about 250 feet deep. You can only see small glimpses of the river because the canyon is very narrow and twisty.



Deep Canyon on the Maligne River



Tree in Canyon



Waterfall Below Second Bridge



Carved Canyon Wall.



River Deep in Canyon



Second Bridge



Pothole with carving rocks near fourth bridge.

We continued down to and across the third bridge and on to the fourth bridge. The trail is really steep and has lots of steps so the big camera stayed in the car. The fifth and sixth bridges are quite a bit further downstream and it is a 2 -3 hour round trip, so we opted to save them for another time.



River coming out from under ground



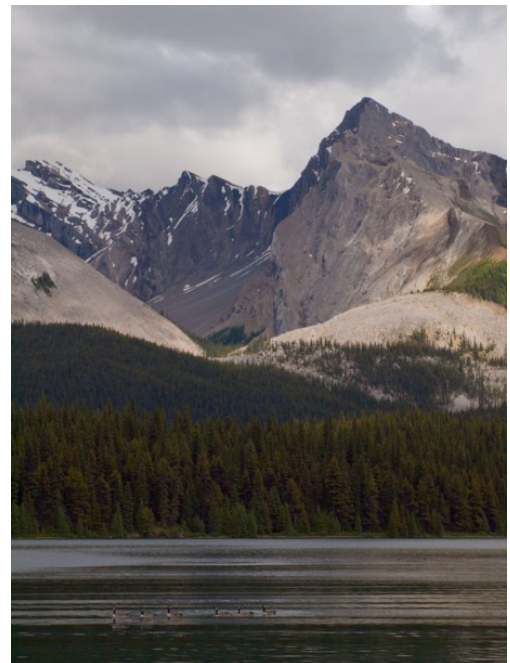
Cascading river



Pool with stream falling into it

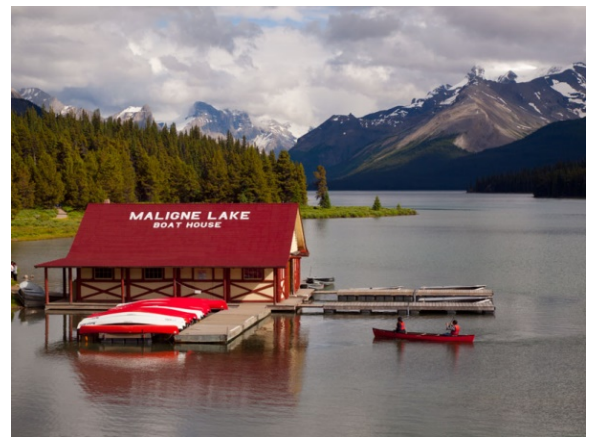
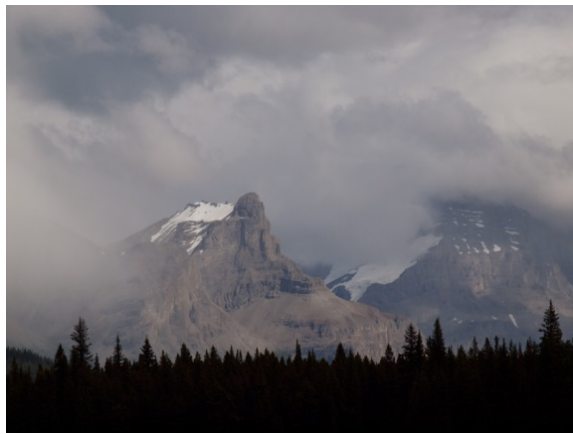


pictures from a wooden dock on the lake.



We continued up Maligne Road to the Maligne Lake at the end of the road. I spent a good deal of time taking digital pictures from a wooden dock on the lake. The light was changing and the clouds were

moving, all helping to set up some interesting moody photos. Jill got tired of watching me, so she walked over to the lodge and I caught up with her there.



It was late when we headed back through town, so we stopped a Becker House for dinner and Jill took a photo from the table of the river view we had with her phone.



View from Becker House.

22 Date: 7/05/2016

Time: 4:30 pm

Mileage: 37,530

Location: Grande Cache

Heading North

Nothing very exciting today. We left the Jasper NP today and headed out the northeast entrance to Hinton, Alberta. We shopped at Walmart, Safeway and Canadian Tire, before gassing up. Canadian Tire was quite the surprise. While it does sell and install tires, it is more a combination auto part store, sporting goods store and garden center. We bought gear oil for the Tracker's front differential that began leaking badly in Montana.



Field of Cow Parsnips



Gate Hardware.

We drove on up Highway 40 to Grande Cache and camped in the City campground. Driving into the campground, we began to worry about our selection of this campground, as the area resemble junk yards. When we got to the campground though, it turned out to be very nice. It is in a nice wooded area with mature native trees and decent spacing between sites. The sites could be a bit more level, as we had to change

sites to level up.

After dinner, we took a walk and took a few pictures too. Tomorrow a nice slow trip up Dawson Creek, and the start of the Alcan Highway.

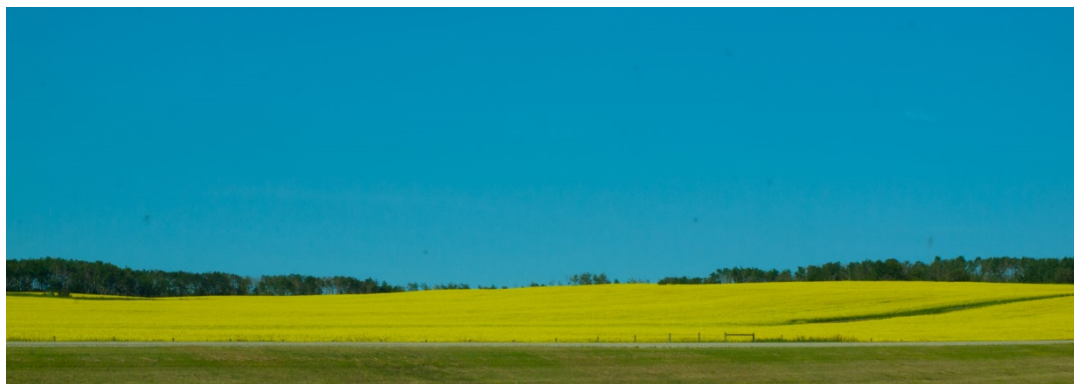
Time: 4:00 pm

Mileage: 37,646

Location: Grande Prairie

Dinosaurs on the Loose on the Prairie.

Left Grande Cache a little late (around 11:00) so we only drove a couple of hours to Grande Prairie.



Lots and lots of prairie around here with lots of farms. They grow hay and canola around here. Very pretty yellow fields.

We stopped at the Tourist and Business Center, and they had free coffee, snacks and a very nice local "Heritage Discovery" museum with local pioneer history and dinosaurs.

Back home we see a TV program call Tiny House Nation. We think we have the nicest Tiny House with our RV. We saw the original tiny house which was on sleigh runners and called an "All-Purpose Caboose."



by horses or oxen.

The museum also had a First Nation traditional home, a Teepee. These were shorter than those of the Plains Indians and because they had plenty of lodge pole pines in the area they didn't have to carry the poles...just the hide covering! Take that you tiny house people.

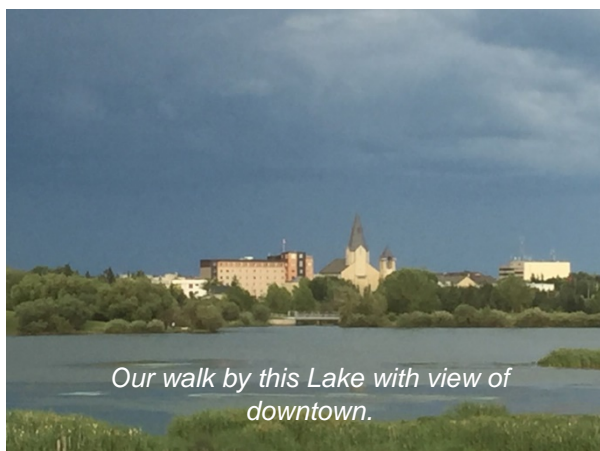


All Purpose Caboose



We also went out to the Philip J. Currie Dinosaurs Museum. They have found a lot of Dinosaur bones in the nearby area, and they have a new Museum covering the local pre-pre-pre historic wildlife. It was very well done. Even though we did a lot of museum walking, by the evening I had only done half my steps. So we walked the very nice trail around the little lake in the park next to our campsite. Still not enough steps so to finish off I walked around the little campground a few of times. Sam wanted to go back to our tiny house not just walk by it.

Jm-a



Time: 3:00 pm

Mileage: 37,864

Location: Pink Mountain

We made it to The ROAD...

The Alcan highway

So about 50 miles up the road from Grande Prairie is Dawson Creek, MILE 0 on the AICan Highway which US Army Corps of Engineers built in 1942-43 (in eight months). We stopped took the required tourist shots, got information at their tourist center, looked at the local art gallery (in a grain elevator) and of course partook in some of the local cultural ... a Bakery!!!!



Les by new Mile Zero.



Jill by Original Mile Zero



We started up the "ROAD" as the soldier's called it back 42 and took a short side trip to the only original timber bridge, Kiskatinaw River Bridge on the "ROAD". Had lunch and then crossed the timber bridge in our RV. We felt pretty good until we realize this wooden bridge was 74 years old!

We then proceeded up the ROAD, another 140 miles. It is raining today, here and there along the way. Sometimes the highway is dry, other times water is sheeting

over the pavement, and we can hardly see through the down pour. We both mention how good this road is now. It used to be an adventure just driving it. This was especially true when my family did it in 1965, and while it had improved it was still a little rough in 1995 when Les and I did it in Old Rhino our 18ft motorhome last time. The road has improved and the towns like Dawson Creek and Fort St. Johns are bigger, with all the comforts of home (KFC, McDonalds, Walmart!). Now the big adventure is making sure we don't get hit by the GAS Company Worker going home to their work camps or "open camps" along the way. These are usually grouping of large modular square building with no niceties just ugly blocks temporary of buildings.

There is still one thing that is an adventure...The RV parks. Pink Mountain RV Park's ad in the Milepost stated, "Relax folks, you've arrived at one the nicest campgrounds on the Alaska Highway." It is a mud pit!! And there are trucks everywhere. It looks like they have a lot of side business, sewage pumping, driving supplies, gas station, and post office. So for the first time, I am not going try to make my step goal! Between the rain and the mud, I might just get stuck. Les was getting tired and at least it has Wi-Fi to post these Blogs.



Pink Mountain Campsite.

25 Date: 7/08/2016

Time: 9:30 pm

Mileage: 38006

Location: Fort Nelson, BC

Following Moose Sign

Left Pink Mountain in the clouds...literally in the clouds, a gray day. We decided to stop early in Fort Nelson about 180 miles or three hours of driving. Taking our time is great. We are sitting doing our laundry this afternoon and



Fort Nelson Post Office

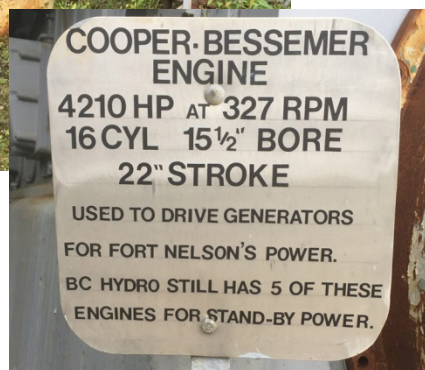
watching the rigs come pouring off the road around 4:00 pm. Loving our taking it nice and easy plan.

Having a little technical difficulty...Last night Les and I went to pug our CPAP machines in at the same time and blew the lights over our bed. Les has checked and cannot find a blown fuse??? We may have to be in the dark until Fairbanks and RV a fixer. Luckily we have a solar lantern, now if the sun will only shine.



When we went to lunch, a local asked...Have you been to the museum yet? So we went to another Heritage Museum. This one looked a lot like a Junk/Antique shop or yard. No rhyme or reason to the "exhibits" but lots of old stuff, especially cars. The interpreter/museum director in me wanted to take the place in hand and organize the layout to tell stories. Actually it was kind of fun wandering among the stuff wondering what each item was

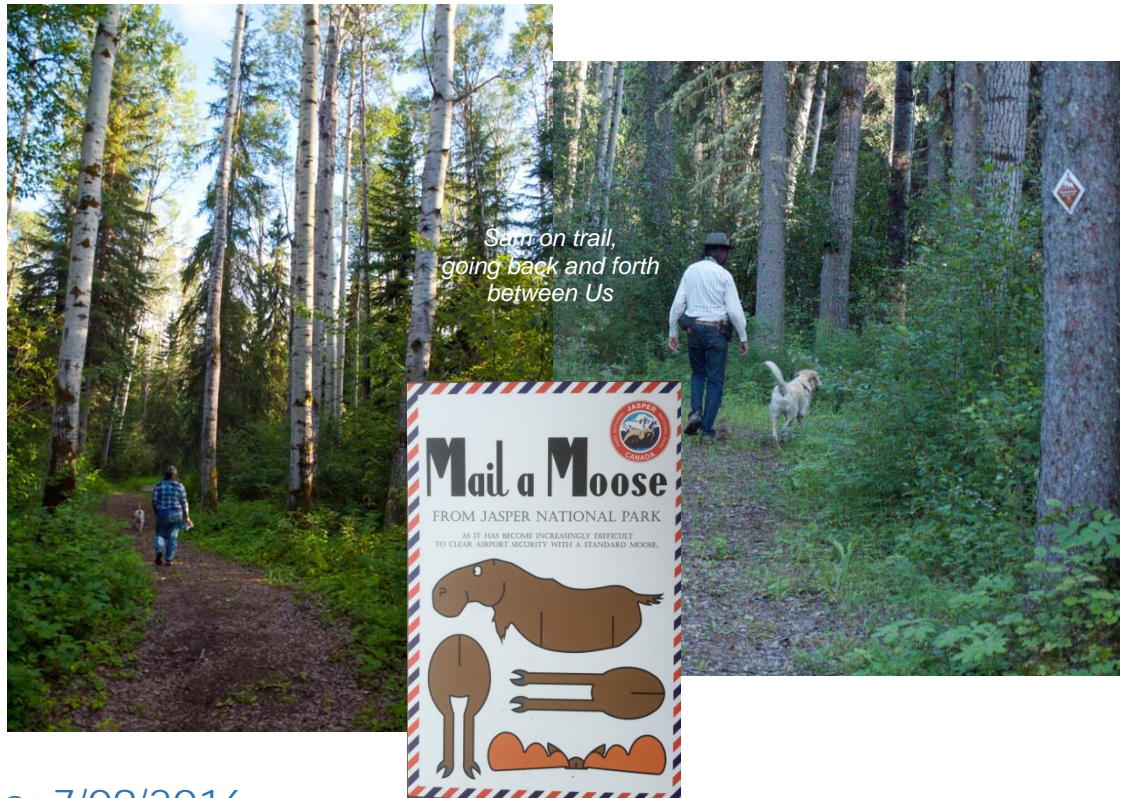
about





I was worried that I would not get a walk today and not meet my goal. We got a break in the weather around 7:30 pm and I found a 3.4 km loop trail in nearby demonstration forest. It was called the Moose trail...So we set out to follow the "Sign of the Moose". The trail was through the dense forest, with alder, aspen and spruce. It also went along a pond and through a bog, with lots of mosquitos. We tried our new mosquito head nets they seemed to work some, but Les still had me double timing around the loop. Sam loved the trail as he ran back and forth or maybe he was just trying to keep the mosquitos away...





26 Date: 7/09/2016

Time: 4:30 pm

Mileage: 38192

Location: Liard Hot Springs

First Real Moose

We hadn't been away from Fort Nelson, but an hour when Jill see info in one of her tour books that says there are the greatest cinnamon rolls, on the road, coming up ahead. So we pulled off and bought a cinnamon roll and a loaf of home-made bread. Les ate most of it and shared some with Jill.



While we sat there enjoying the cinnamon roll, Jill began to chuckle at a sign on the gas pump behind me. Gas in Canada is expensive, but away from large cities where there is no competition, it can get ridiculous. There gas here was \$1.599 per liter which is equivalent to \$6.05 per gallon. Thus the sign.

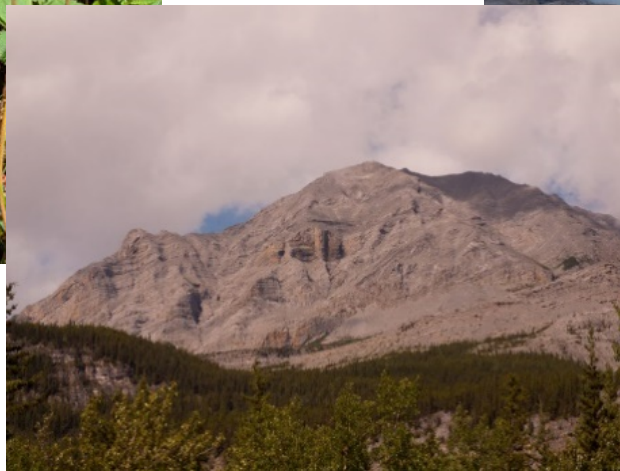


Moving on up the highway we encountered a herd of Stone Sheep. They look a lot like Bighorn Sheep, but they are lighter colored and thinner. They are more closely related to Dall sheep of the Yukon and Alaska.

We pulled off the road for lunch across from Folded Mountain. The layers of rock are greatly twisted. The sun is out, so we ate lunch outside at Café Tatanka, and enjoyed the view. In the grassy area beside us, we discovered ripe wild strawberries



Further up the road, suddenly I yelled out "MOOSE, on the right. So Jill grabbed the camera at her feet and got two shots of the cow moose grazing alongside of the road. We saw a real live **MOOSE!!!**.

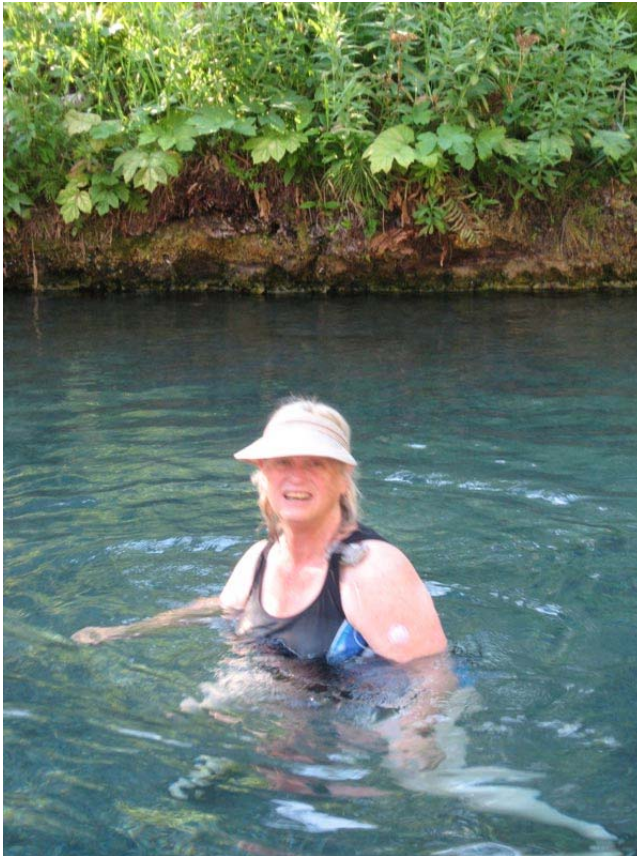


A short distance up the road we found more Stone Sheep on the highway. We slowed down to a crawl and as we approached, all but the one on the far right moved to the other side of the road. The one on the right continued licking salt from the edge of the road as we passed.

The one place Jill remembers from her trip in 1965 was Liard Hot Springs. When we came through in 1995, we didn't have time to stop. So, several days ago, Jill made reservations to camp at Liard Hot Springs Lodge. The official pamphlet we got at Dawson Creek indicated it was about 20 miles before the Hot Springs themselves. We had a lot of issues working the conversion from miles to kilometers and back. We finally saw a home made sign to the lodge that said 1 KM and had a left arrow that pointed at a gravel road on the left side of the highway. This must be the place, but after leaving the highway, the road disintegrated into an mass of pot holes.



I did my best, unsuccessfully, to avoid the pot holes. When we got to a dilapidated building, we decided the sign was typical for Canada and it really meant to say 1 km up the highway and on the left.



We got luck though and found a good sized turn around by the building and continued up the highway. We found the entrance to Liard Hot Springs, but not the

lodge. So we parked in the pull out across the highway and started to look around. Jill walked 50' up the highway, then called to me. "It's over here." It was just beyond a clump of trees almost across the highway from the entrance to the hot springs. So much for the 20 miles! And of course there was no sign on the highway pointing at the lodge. That was a km back down the road. The lodge is closed but the RV park is level and graveled, with power and very little else. The best thing is that it is in walking distance to the hot springs. Going to do some soaking!

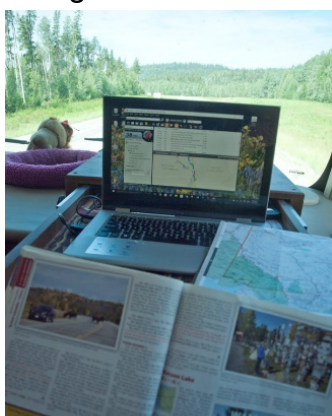
Time: 8:00 pm

Mileage: 38319

Location: Watson Lake

Buffalo

Up the road a little bit we saw other RVs on the side of the road. On both sides of the highway was a small herd of Wood Buffalo. While there used to be Bison in this area, they were hunted to extinction in the late 19th century. These were reintroduced sometime after 1980 and seeing the large number of calves, they appear to be doing well.



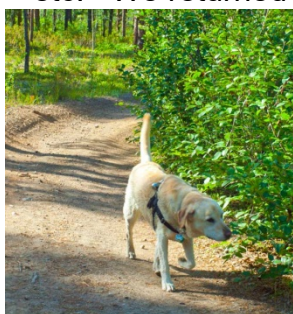
While I keep the motorhome on the road and moving along, Jill keeps us going in the right direction and looking for points of interest as we got.

We stopped for the day at Watson Lake, in the Yukon. One of the site to see is the Sign Post Forest. It started with a single mile post erected by the US Army during the construction of the original AlCan Highway. Over the years, visitors have added to it so that it has become a forest of signs, literally.



After lunch, we visited the Northern Lights Center. It is a planetarium and had a

couple of shows that we saw. The first was about the determining the size of the universe and the next was about the northern lights. We bought a tee shirt there that shows a modification of the sign post forest adding signs to Mars etc. We returned to the motorhome where I took a nap and



Jill took Sam for a 3 KM walk around the lake next to the RV park. Sam loved the walk and the swim he had in the lake.



Time: 8:00 pm

Mileage: 38479

Location: Teslin

Waterfalls, Lakes, and Tlingit Culture.

Continuing up or west on Yukon Highway 1 BC Highway 97 Yukon Highway 1, (it weaves between the two providences) we stopped at Rancheria Falls. A very nice trail and raised walkway lead out to several great views of the two falls. As soon as I saw the first view, I went back to the car and got the big camera. While I took 3 shots, Jill sat and sketched the larger fall.



We moved on, stopping at Smart River for lunch. There was some else there for lunch and he did a little fishing. I did see 2 fish jump. It looked like fun, but alas, I don't have a Yukon fishing license.



We stopped for the night at Teslin which is on this long lake, headwaters for the Yukon River.

We were early enough to take in the Teslin Tlingit Heritage Centre and the George Johnston Museum.

The Tlingit Centre had totem poles outside and beautiful canoes by the lake. Inside, we



listened to a Tlingit woman talk about tanning moose hides and her family life in the area.

At the George Johnston Museum, we learned about another local Tlingit that was quite a marvel. As a young boy, he bought a mail order camera and film processing and printing kit and taught himself to do photography. He took pictures of the people, every day activities, and special occasions. At the age of 16, he walked to Juneau to learn about his native heritage and brought back dance, stories, etc. to the local people. Later, he decided to buy a car and bring it to Teslin. The fact that Teslin had NO roads in 1928, did not detour him. The Chevy arrived by sternwheeler. He and his friends build 3 miles of road to Fox Creek and he started a taxi service, charging \$2 a piece to ride to Fox Creek and back. He also used it on the lake in the winter to hunt game...he painted the car white in the winter so the wildlife wouldn't see him coming, and paint it dark in the summer... When the "ROAD" was built in 1942 through Teslin, his 3 mile road was made part of it.



The bridge into Teslin is the longest bridge on the Alaskan Highway.

After a small dinner, Jill wanted to go for a walk, but with the look of the clouds, we kept it short. We saw the cemetery, where the Tlingit surround the graves with little white picket fences.



29 Date: 7/12/2016

Time: 12:30 pm

Mileage: 38589

Location: Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada

Jill Drove!

We started a little late, so helping I, Jill, started the RV, pulled in the slides and unleveled. Les hops in and gets into the Navigator's seat! Ok, am I driving today? Yep. Everyday I tell Les, if he needs me to drive, I will and everyday he says he is ok driving. The truth be told, I am ok with my husband being a chauvinist when it comes to driving this RV. It is so much fun to sit and watch my "big screen" ie the windshield.

We took a break at a roadside rest area and Les took over driving. We arrived in Whitehorse and planned to stay two nights at the Hi Country RV Park. Jill and Sampson went down to Miles Canyon to take a hike while I stayed behind to shower. When Jill returned, she announced one of hearing aids fell out somewhere since this morning. We searched the motorhome and car, but no luck. This evening, we had great lightening and loud thunder and very heavy rain.

30 Date: 7/13/2016

Time: 6:30 pm

Mileage: 38589

Location: Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada

Touring Whitehorse

We started the day by retracing her steps at Miles Canyon, looking for the missing hearing aid. Sam loved it. Next we checked with the bank, the visitor information center and had another lunch at the Klondyke Rib and Salmon, still no hearing aid.

We gave up the search and started touring Whitehorse. We started with the Copper Belt Mining and Railway Museum where we rode the tour train towed by a one cylinder, 10 HP diesel mining engine.

Interpretation was a bit limited.



Next we went to Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre. The displays and interpretation were outstanding. We really learned a lot about the Bering land bridge and the movement of wildlife and people across it. \

We followed that with a tour of the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre and the Yukon Arts Centre Public Art Gallery. We enjoyed these as well.

We bought groceries and checked with three more store for the hearing aid, still no luck. Jill has decided that since she lost one hearing aid, she won't wear the other, then she does not have to listen to me.

We decided to paint the Whitehorse red, so at 8:30 we took in a show called "Beneath the Yukon Moon" by the Frantic Follies. It was a fun Vaudeville Revue with many puns. My favorite joke was "What do you get when you drop a Grand Piano down a mine shaft? . . . A Flat Minor!"



31 Date: 7/14/2016

Time: 10:30 pm

Mileage: 38773

Location: Pelly Crossing, Yukon, Canada

Starting up the Klondike

We got a late start today. Jill went to the Information center to use their WiFi to post our blogs and check the email. I stayed with the motorhome and finished cleaning, then dumped the tanks and got gas in town. After connecting at the Information Center, we did a quick tour of the SS Klondike riverboat.



Then we headed north on Yukon Highway 2, stopping for yet another "World Famous Cinnamon Roll" this time at Braeburn Lodge.

We stopped and looked over the stabilized cabin remains of the last of the three Montague Roadhouses that use to be part of 53 places along the wagon road between Dawson City and Whitehorse.

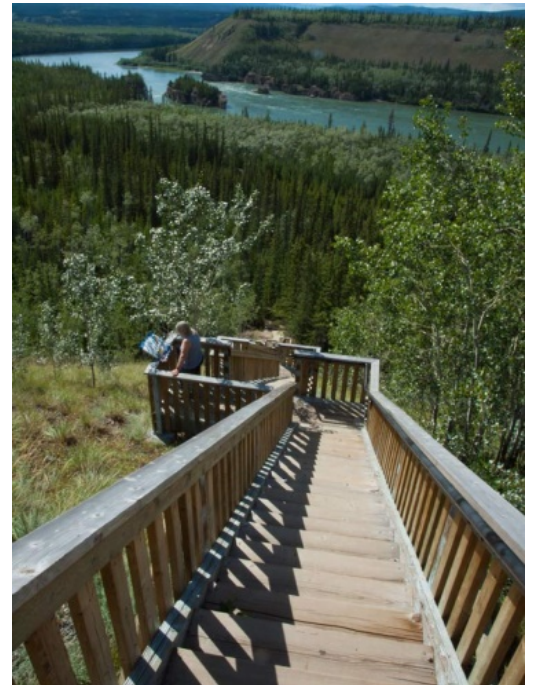
Next we stopped and toured the Tage Cho Hunad Interpretive Centre in Carmacks. We are learning a lot about the First Nations here in Canada.



A little further up Highway 2 we stopped at the overlook of Five Fingers Rapids. There is a couple kilometer trail to take a closer look at the rapids, which starts with

219 stairs straight down the hill. Jill opted to walk down the stairs to the bottom of the hill and back. We did the complete hike back in 1995. Today, it was around 4:00 and I was antsy to be moving on to get a campsite at Pelly Crossing. So no hike this time.

We made it to the First Nation campground at Pelly's Crossing around 5:00 pm. Pelly's Crossing used to be a ferry but now it is this very blue bridge.



After fighting off the hordes of other campers to get a campsite, (actually, the campground was empty) we toured their heritage visitor center, "Big Jonathan House." Jill made me walk around the

campground with her until she met her step goal. Other campers began arriving around 8:00 – 8:30 pm. I guess I didn't have to worry so much. LDA

Time: 6:15 pm

Mileage: 38923

Location: Dawson City, Yukon, Canada

Last stop in Yukon Territory

After a late night of fighting with Microsoft Word to make the spell checker work again in the last part of our journal last night, we slept in. By the time we left the campground, most everyone was already on the road.

We only made one stop on the way to Dawson City. Lunch was at Gravel Lake, where we ate outside. After lunch we spent some time using the spotting scope to identify duck, etc. on the lake. We saw a pair of Trumpeter Swans, Ruddy Duck, Surf Scoter, Pie-billed Grebe and lots of other female ducks. Most female ducks are drab brown ducks, very difficult to identify.



We arrived in Dawson City and set up camp in the RV park just outside of town. The cable does not work as it was knocked out by a storm a few days ago. Fortunately, the power does work, because it is 80 degrees and 90% humidity. For desert folks like us, that is hot!

We went into town to the visitor information centre to ask questions and get info about what to see in town. We wandered around some and bought groceries before returning to the motorhome. Dawson City is a colorful town and I am looking forward to carting the large format camera around shooting historic buildings



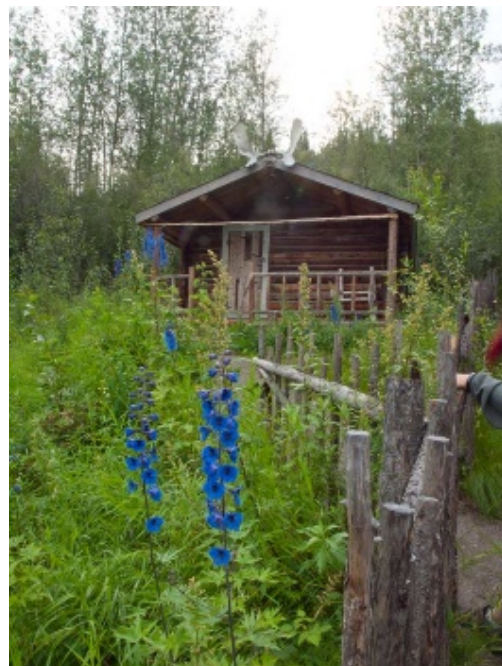
Time: 9:00 pm

Mileage: 38923

Location: Dawson City, Yukon, Canada

Dawson City – Lots to do

We were hoping for clear skies for photography, but several wildfires in the area gave us smoke instead. So we began touring the town at the Robert Service Cabin where we were lead on a personalized hike up the hill behind the cabin to Crocus Overlook with selected readings of Robert Service poems. There was a lot of plant identification that went along on the hike. Our guide was a local college student and he did a very good job.



Next was a tour of the Dawson City Museum. This is a very well done museum. We had a demonstration of gold mining techniques: use of a rocker box, panning and smelting of gold.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we toured the Danoja Zho Cultural Centre. While we were looking at the very nice displays, a young First Nations fellow came in and did a talk about the center, the displays and finished up with how they are bringing back their culture to the tribe.

In the afternoon, we returned to the RV park to do laundry and wash the Tracker again. Back at Watson Lake, vandals had poured vegetable oil on the back of the Tracker. I had washed it that morning, but did not get it all. Road dirt stuck to the remain oil and it was really tuff to scrub off. After dinner, Jill went to town for a walking tour called "Strange Things Done in the Midnight Sun". The guide opened several buildings for the tour, including the old post office.



Time: 8:30 pm

Mileage: 38923

Location: Dawson City, Yukon, Canada

Dawson City – More to do!

Since the road up to Dredge # 4 is about a hundred feet in front of our camp site, we started with visiting it first this morning. Dredge #4 is the largest of about 20 dredges that worked the Dawson City mining district in the early 1900's. It stands 8 stories tall. While other dredges were usually taken apart and moved out of the area, this dredge was flooded by a flood from a burst dam in 1959 and stuck in



When Jill and I visited here in 1995, I think the dredge was still stuck in the permafrost and there was no tour inside. This time we were guided through the dredge. I shot a number of interesting machinery abstract photos with the digital camera. I also got some large format photos outside before the clouds moved in



permafrost for many decades. Parks Canada has extracted the dredge from the permafrost and is currently rebuilding it as a permanent display. Each of the 66 buckets of the chain of buckets weighs 2,000 pounds and will hold two and a half yards of material. The bucket boom is able to dig down to 57 feet below the dredge. The dredge cost \$425,000 and paid for itself in the first season of operations.







A couple of miles up the creek from Dredge #4, we visited Discovery Claim. This is the place that kicked off the Klondike gold rush in 1896. It was not really known outside the local remote area until about 40 Multi-millionaire miners arrived in Seattle 8 months later. By the time the gold rushers got to Dawson City, everything was already claimed. There is some debate who found the first gold, George Carmacks, his brother-in-law Skookum Jim, or George's first nation

wife... one of our guides it was said that the person that was down at the creek, cleaning up after dinner and they found a gold nugget...She said "so it must have been the wife!"

Parks Canada has a program they call Red Chairs. These are chairs they place in most of their parks at special places to sit and enjoy the beauty of the area. Here it was at the Discovery Claim site along the creek.



After lunch at the motorhome, we toured Lack London's cabin and museum.

Jack London was only in Dawson City about 9 months. He came up with the first wave of miners in 1897, but after being hospitalized with scurvy, he returned to San Francisco where his writing career finally took off. Many of his books included tails of the north, as in "Call of the Wild" and "White Fang".



Next was a tour of the Commissioner's House. The Yukon is a territory and it was the early territorial capital be for it was moved to Whitehorse. The Commissioner's House was used for several purposes including the residence of George and Martha Black. Martha Black while married to her first husband, left him and her two sons to search for some miner' lost gold valued at a million dollars in the Dawson City area during the gold rush. She had a third son the following spring and

when her father found out, he came to Dawson City and took her back to Kansas. She had filed a few claims on the way to Dawson City and when they proved profitable, she returned to Dawson City. She married George Black, a local lawyer. He became the territorial commissioner and later served in parliament. When he got sick, Martha served out his term and was then elected to that office. As part of the tour of the house, they served us tea on the veranda. The weather was getting cold but the hot tea was nice. For a small town, this place is loaded with stories and things to see.



35 Date: 7/18/2016

Time: 9:00 pm

Mileage: 38930

Location: Dawson City, Yukon, Canada

Dawson City – Across the Yukon River

We got up, cleaned the motorhome, dumped the tanks, refilled the fresh water and gassed up. We left the RV park and crossed the Yukon River on the free ferry. We left the Tracker in town and after finding a camp site just across the river, we rode the ferry back and did more touring in town.





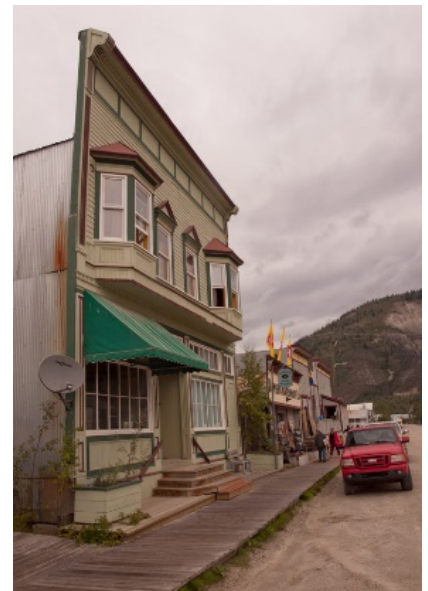
We started with the SS Keno. This was the smallest of the 60 plus paddle wheelers operated by the British Yukon Navigation Company. At 140 feet in length and 30 feet wide, it would draw 18 inches unloaded and 24" loaded. It was used on smaller rivers that the larger boats, like the SS Klondike, could not navigate. It was the first and last boat to service Dawson City each year. It was taken out of service in 1953 after the road connected Dawson City to the world. It was one of 5 paddle

wheelers given the Canadian government and in 1960, it made its final journey back to Dawson City to be put on display. We watched a short film of that last journey on board. The bridge at Carmacks was too low to pass under, so they removed the wheelhouse and the smoke stack to get under the bridge. Since the river had not been charted for 5 years,



they ran aground on a gravel bar. They were able to winch themselves off and complete the trip.

We wandered around town and had lunch and finished the day by driving to the top of Dome Mountain, south of town. From there, the dredge tailings on the Klondike River below were quite evident.





We took the Tracker across the Yukon River and back to camp to have dinner. After dinner, we found the trail out of the campground to the Paddlewheel Graveyard, just downstream. There are 7 paddle wheelers rotting in the forest just off the river. The first group of 4 were easy to find, but it took us a while to locate the last 3. The trails are unmarked and the vegetation is very overgrown. The failing light and the forest canopy made even digital photography difficult. The weather

should be broken tomorrow, so I plan to return and get some large format photos of selected spots.

While hunting for the graveyard, a paddlewheel boat with tourists aboard came by and I shot video of it.

