

Vancouver Island 1975

26 June.

Left home about 1 pm. Mileage 20126. Camped at Crimson Lake Park. Rain started about 1-2 hours after we left home. At camp everything wet and muddy, but no rain. Went out for canoe ride, and kids had a cool swim.

27 June.

Near noon headed west on David Thompson Highway. Nordegg nonexistent except for correctional institution. Saw Bighorn Dam. Windy and dusty.

Ran out of gas 15 miles before Lake Louise, in light rain and snow. Hitchhiked in on bouncy dumptruck and got gas. A friendly driver (who also had run out of gas, from Kimberley) drove me back. Arrived Revelstoke in pouring rain, ate at Smitty's (kids all hungry), then headed south and camped at Blanket Creek Provincial Park on the Columbia river. Only three or four of the 60-odd sites were occupied. Fine park. Set up in rain that stopped near morning.

28 June.

On south to Nakusp, crossed on Galena Bay ferry (about half hour wait) and later on Fangier-Needles ferry. Still cloudy. Winding road with many grades between Needles and Vernon. Arrived Vernon about 6 pm. Ellison Park full. Arguments about where to camp. Went to Dutch's Acres. Reasonable site, though expensive, \$4.75.

29 June.

Planned to go to church in Vernon but arrived when service done. Yearbook said 11 am, actually 10. Decided to pack up and go south. Left at noon, and camped at Peach Orchard Park at Summerland (Okanagan Provincial Park was full). Campground nice, shaded, lots of room, clean showers, \$3 per night. Run by municipality. Beach a 10-minute walk away and not attractive. First sunshine today. To beach a few miles south, but water quite cold.

30 June.

Spent a good part of the day at Penticton beach. Hot and sunny but water still cold. Too cold for waterskiing. Cherries barely ripe.

1 July.

Packed up and saw Karen off at Penticton airport at 10:25 am. Sunny and warm. Drove to Princeton-Hope to Cultus Lake Provincial Park. No problem finding a site near beach, but beach of crushed rock. Water still cool but kids swam. Had a nice canoe ride. Traffic no problem.

2 July.

Left about 11 for Vancouver Island. Got to Horseshoe Bay 1:30 pm and were second last to get on 2:30 ferry. Had given up hope but just made it on. Before boarding met John and Kay Ebbers who were last to get on. Spent most of the 2-hour trip talking to them. Also met Kurt and Lynn Kutschera on the ferry, on their way to Long Beach. Camped at Englishman River Provincial Park. Very nice campground. Walked to upper and lower falls. Upper falls nice.

3 July.

On to Long Beach. Sunny and warm. Green Point camp full, so parked on beach. Strong on-shore wind but relatively warm. Everything gets sany. Kids swam, but water cool (10C). Breaking waves lots of fun. At 10 pm naturalist talk show.

4 July.

Our cooler is gone! Everyone unhappy. Instead of beach walk we go to Tofino (13 miles) to get a new cooler and food. Return just in time for spruce fringe walk at 2. Nice trail, but naturalist not too inspiring. Beautiful sunny and warm day. Very unusual here. First nice week since May! Mark and I go on a 3-hour guided canoe paddle (12 canoes) around Indian Island. Very nice. Saw some sea lions, birds. Naturalist talk (Wayne) interesting and amusing. West Coast Trail (20 miles north of Intinat Lake) must be very nice. Should think about walking part of it some time.

5 July.

Mark, Ann, Joan and I go on 5.5-hour wilderness hike to the five Radar beaches from Radar Hill. Very enjoyable, but everyone tired. Ate out at Schooner Restaurant in Tofino. Excellent salmon and halibut and other food. Everyone happy. Back at camp went to uninspiring naturalist talk and then to bed.

In the morning strong SE wind. Mark's tent collapsed on him (stakes pulled out), and canopy blew around. Put stove inside trailer. Wind down at night but fog stays. At night everything is damp. Matches might refuse to light and have to get started with cigarette lighter. National Film Board film "Evolution" (10 min.) was good, funny.

6 July.

Got up late and went to camp worship service at 11. Six others there beside us. Student minister Ed Johnston with guitar, overalls, and long curly red hair. Sang some songs and heard brief sermon (no text). After lunch (=breakfast) walked on Rain Forest trail and went to Ucluelet. Mark, Ann, and I went for canoe ride to Indian Island. Mark caught an 8-inch fish. Ann and I felt sorry for the fish with the hook in its mouth, but pulled it out and threw the fish back. Found two nice purple starfish and took some pictures of it.

7 July.

Mileage 21525. Got up at 7 and left camp at 9, headed for Hornby Island. After about 30 miles the sun came out and weather was beautiful. Stopped at McMillan Cathedral Grove and looked at the big Douglas fir trees. Very nice trail. While waiting for the ferry, talked to Mrs. Schatz, an artist-teacher from Portland holidaying on Denman Island. Took two ferries to Hornby Island and arrived about 4. Found Tribune Bay campsite. Primitive but nice sites, especially #8, and next #9. Will accept reservations. After supper went to beach to swim. Beach rocky but bottom sandy between big rocks. Water fine, though salty. Had a disagreement with a drunken fellow over air mattress. He threatened me with a whole, then a broken wine bottle, then swam out after me. Things were settled peacefully and we went back to camp. Camp operator and local friends went out to remove the annoyin characters. Played two games of Mille Bornes and went to bed at 12. Soon a roaring thunderstorm started and it rained good and hard a good part of then night. At 1 am, Ann and Joan came out of their tent into the trailer and we spent a good night despite the noise of rain and thunder.

8 July.

Warm, but damp in the morning. Sun came out about 11 and weather turned beautiful. Off to the beach at about 11:30. Low tide, and beautiful sandy beach. Drove on gravel over sand and promptly got stuck. With the help of a borrowed shovel, some pieces of driftwood and some pushers got out again about a half hour later and minus some sweat and rubber. Mark, Ann, and I went on a 2-hour canoe trip. Mark fished, but got no bites. Everyone tired and sunburned. Back at beach the tide had come in fast and got some shoes and a towel wet. Sandy beach now gone.

9 July.

Got up fairly early and left about 9:30. Caught 11 o'clock ferry. Just before leaving told Monday night's story to RCMP officer that came across on the ferry. Apparently the drunken fighter was in jail now on some other charges. At Qualicum Beach bought some salmon (at Bowser some oysters) and got to Nanaimo at 1:25. The 1:30 ferry left, the 2:30 ferry left, and we left at 4:15. Hot and dull at ferry terminal. Drove to Stanley Park aquarium and saw two whale shows (killer whales and arctic white whales). Very impressive. Not enough time to see all the other beauties. Had some problem getting out of Stanley Park on the right road to camp – 9 o'clock and still no supper either. After some searching, got to Tsawwassen and found Dairy Queen where we spent almost all our remaining money on supper (\$9.05) at 10:15 pm. Got to campground at 10:45 and went straight to bed. Fortunately the campground (Park Canada) accepted Chargex. Nice campground, 1 mile or so from the ferry terminal, with all facilities. Overflow area fine for us. Mileage now 21769.

10 July.

Woke up at 6:30 to a sunny, breezy morning. Dixie and I got up, showered and got laundry done, first time in two weeks. Went to bank in Tsawwassen and heard squeaky trailer wheel. To garage right away, needed two wheel bearings and seals, both on inside of wheels. One bearing came out in small pieces. Apparently wheel bearings should be packed with grease at least once a year. At 1:45 the trailer was fixed and we went picking strawberries, about 17 or 18 pounds at 35 cents a pound. Plus two baskets bought, this made about 25 pounds. By the time we got going it was 4:30. Stopped in Abbotsford's Centennial Park and cooked salmon steaks for supper. Drove through Fraser Canyon until about 10 miles south of Lytton, to a campground called Blue Lake Resort, up a steep half mile from the highway. By this time it was dark and 10 pm, and we went to bed. Temperature had been in the thirties during the day and we did not need much cover during the night.

11 July.

Light rain started about 6:30 or so, and we got up and left by 7:40. Rain kept on and we had breakfast at the Sandman Inn Restaurant in Cache Creek. The Yellowhead sure beats Rogers Pass and Hope-Princeton highway for driving, in grades and curves. Clouds gradually cleared away and by arrival at Robson Meadows Provincial Park the sky was clear. Still warm. Arrived about 6 pm. Naturalist talk at 7:30 on beavers, bees, and butterworts. Nature House is very nice, including a live frog-in-residence. Some suffered effects of too many strawberries. Had a good time around the campfire.

12 July.

Canceled plans for early morning hike with Mark and slept a bit longer instead. Mark made eggs and bacon for breakfast, over a fire. After leaving, it soon got quite hot and everyone complained. Had a wiener roast at camp just east of Edson, in a bit of shade. Arrived home about 5:30 pm. Mileage 22571.