

Before we moved to Wind Crest, Ed and I belonged to a Boat and Travel Club, made up of people with small, trailer-able, cabin cruisers.

BRITISH COLUMBIA TRIP – 2003

Marilyn Borton

We're just re-entering from a trip of a life time, way up the coast of British Columbia. We began with ten boats for the first couple of weeks, and the last four weeks there were only five. The others had to get back for other commitments. It was a great group of people, all doing more than what was expected of them and lots of camaraderie. Two of the boats were fishing boats and often left the rest of us to drop crab or prawn traps. One day they struck gold and got nine salmon - from the same school that four pods of orcas were interested in circling their boat. They came back so excited, as were the rest of us to have our fill of salmon for dinner. They also kept us supplied with crab, prawns, oysters, and clams with the rest of us filling in for potluck dinners. Our meals were superb - way better than restaurant meals, and fresher.

Dan's (the leader) style of leadership allowed each day to unfold in its own way, and just about every day was a new and unexpected adventure, from doing rapids in the dinghies, hiking beautiful Provincial trails, swimming, clamming, oystering, blackberrying, fun and interesting restaurants built on log rafts. One of them had two dogs to chase away the bears when they got too close at low tide. One marina had a Black-Tie Pig Roast, where everyone was asked to wear a tie of their creations (rope, bungees, seaweed, etc.). Because this was way up north, there were few boats and fewer marinas, so when one of the marinas was having an event, the same boats would show up for the fun. At this one, we were privileged to tie up to the float of a very interesting couple, who were educated, articulate people, and had chosen to simplify their lives. They had built their own boat and lived there on it year-round, and they had an artistically decorated shed that they built on floating logs for their studio, and lots of books in every possible space. He made arrowheads from obsidian, she did beautiful bead work, and they wore animal skins (sometimes). They went shopping three times a year, otherwise they lived on what they had - fish, planters growing their vegetables etc. They had a rain barrel for fresh water. Interesting talking to them.

Another adventure was when we saw a large white edifice that was so out of place way up there in the wilderness that we decided to check it out. It was the newly-completed Big House of an Indian Tribe that was regrouping on their own land after smallpox and the Canadian Government had wiped them out 70 years ago. The Indian Chief, who met us on the dock as we motored up, had cleared the land and built this Big House by himself so that his and the neighboring tribes could have their meetings (potlatch). 41 families had already returned and another 130 were in the process of relocating. The Chief was a man of few words and we weren't sure if we were welcome, but his granddaughter came down, was very cordial and toured us through the new Big House. Said her grandfather was a very humble man and would

go down in history for what he had done. He was currently working on a dugout canoe that would accommodate 12 paddlers on each side.

I loved being so far away from civilization and felt very secure in Dan's competency. He was an experienced seaman and knew how to maneuver the tides, currents and weather. He was here for any of us who had a mechanical problem, and was open to any suggestions of what people wanted to do. We were a very satisfied and excited group of adventurers. How could next year top this one? Re-entering our former world was something of a culture shock.