

## CHRISTMAS 2020

From Comox, on beautiful Vancouver Island BC, Jennie & I wish you a very



To say the least, 2020 certainly has been a different year. Jennie & I hope you are safe and well.

To start the new year off right, we walked one of our favourite walks, around the Courtenay Air Park. This is what the west coast is all about in the winter— no snow!

I really miss having an oven in our RV, but the cottage had one, so I went to town: Cheese & Jalapeno scones.



Then four days later...



In March, Jen headed to the UK to continue her genealogy research. I didn't go so I made a video for Jen to take with her: <https://youtu.be/2vnbwSo8jVg>

Unfortunately, a week or so after arriving in the UK, the pandemic shut everything down. Jennie managed to get a flight back home much to our collective relief.

We extended our stay at our rented cottage twice, eventually leaving June 1. Because of the pandemic, we followed our provincial health guidelines and stayed on Vancouver Island.

You might remember we moved to Vancouver Island back in 1991 so we did wonder where our summer travels were going to take us. Surprisingly, we had an enjoyable summer, visiting old friends and finding new places to explore.

We walked into Courtenay one day, along a paved walkway from the Airpark, all the way to downtown.

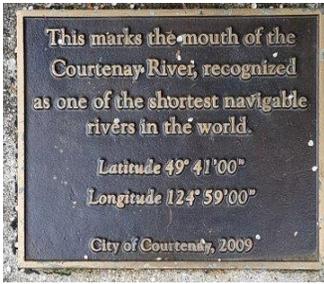


A couple of weeks later, this happened...



In February, we waited for friend Donna at the Comox airport. We were horsing around. I think Jen got carried away :)





We had not walked this path before. We read this signpost with interest.

Turns out, the river meanders only about 2 kms.

In early June, we ventured south to Deep Bay. Along the way we were intrigued by this eclectic piece of folk art.



During a walk in the forest, I noticed this plant. Look closely. Can you see the "leaf-shaped" growth? Beautifully strange or is it strangely beautiful?

During our walk at the Colliery Dam Park in Nanaimo on June 19th, I spotted this old stump.

Notice the horizontal "notch" where loggers of old inserted wood planks to stand on so they could harvest the tree.



The lake behind the dam created an idyllic scene.



A few days later we pulled into Bamberton Provincial Park. Can you connect the "dots"?



On June 25, we strolled around old town Duncan in the summer sun. The First Nation's influence was apparent.

Our next stop was Malahat Mountain Meadows campground, on the northern slope of the Malahat. As we had time to kill before check-in, we parked on the side of the road, hit the beach and enjoyed coffee in the morning sunshine.



After Malahat Mountain Meadows, we headed for Metchosin and our young Czech friends. We stopped in Langford for a walk. We could not believe the development—just look at all the scars on the landscape, no doubt soon to be houses and/or condos!



Jarda & Petra had arranged a BBQ for our arrival so we could meet some of their neighbours.

After dinner, while Petra made crepes with strawberries for dessert, Jarda fixed the coffee grinder.

We spent a delightful few days at their cottage.



Sunday morning (Jul 5), Jarda took me to his job site. He'd just finished adding this deck to the tiny house.

That same afternoon, we visited Bilston Creek Farm. On the weekends, visitors can walk the grounds of the lavender farm and partake of their food and drink offerings. Petra works there and invited us to visit. She was able to join us for a quick bite during one of her breaks.



We drove in to Langford a few days later. The weather had warmed so we sat outside a favourite café—Poncho's, watched the fountain in the roundabout and enjoyed coffee and a snack.



After coffee we drove to Esquimalt Lagoon for a walk. Look at what we found—driftwood art! These are some; there were many.



We visited Ed Macgregor Park in Sooke. Jen wanted to walk the boardwalk (we'd seen it from a distance from Whiffen Spit park) but she had to navigate these stairs. Afterwards, completely spent, she said it was worth it. That sure looks like a fog bank out in the 'chuck, doesn't it?



Later in the week, a visit to Victoria was in order. We walked around the waterfront, always pretty!



This old tug certainly looks like it's someone's luxury yacht now. Wouldn't you love to have a tour?

I had to include this picture of this **single** tree with an arch cut into it. Believe it or not, the tree is on the right side of the arch and grows over to the left—just one tree! Amazing.



We stayed in Lake Cowichan for a few days and enjoyed exploring this small town we had only previously driven through.



We continued our drive north. On the waterfront in Qualicum Beach, we wondered how this Musk Ox ended up stuck in the sand?!



We'd driven by this place that had Sleeping barrels and Sauna barrels on display outside. We just had to stop and check them out.

What really caught our eye was this hand-carved door, carved from a single piece of wood. It looks like the branches might have been added later but no—amazingly, carved from one piece of wood. What talent!

During a visit to Little Qualicum River falls, I took this picture of the falls in all their glory.

By late August we'd had enough of "where do we go; how long do we stay" so we stayed locally at a couple of RV parks, basically killing time until Oct 1, when we were due at our winter location.



One morning, I went to the van to find this little "critter" asleep on Alfie's rear bumper. Have you ever seen a pine cone seed sprouting? Me either! Unfortunately it didn't make it.

By mid-September smoke from the wild fires on the US west coast made their presence known in our area. It was pretty bad. We were so happy to see the clear skies return a few days later.



On October 1 we returned to Comox for the winter.

We want to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Stay safe and be well.

*Doug & Jennie*