

Kamloops to Golden, BC

Boy, what a change in the weather. Officially, it is not summer yet (still a few days to go) but is it ever hot!

We drove south on Monday (June 18) from Clearwater. Hwy 5, the Yellowhead, follows the north Thompson River, as does the CN railway. The area around Barriere, where the terrible forest fire rampaged through ten years ago, was very green. The remains of burnt trees still jut out from the landscape, but the area is much prettier than the last time we were through here 3 years ago.



At the Paul Lake turnoff, just a few clicks north of Kamloops, we turned left. We climbed into the hills, thinking that the temperature would drop as we gained altitude. Nope, well, it did, but later in the day it was in the mid-30s (C). Phew, we're not ready!

Paul Lake Provincial Park is tucked away in the trees. The campsites are large and very private.



We set up camp and then drove a little further down the road to Pinantan Lake. At the General Store, an ice cream jumped out of the tub and into my hand. Mmmm chocolate with peanut butter. Jen had some fruity concoction. We moved out to the outside deck and were pleasantly surprised with a nice view and Shaw wifi.

Some of you may remember that Mattie came from Allsgold's Kennel in Pinantan Lake.

We were so close we could not not go and visit the kennel. Brenda came out to greet us. We introduced ourselves and talked about

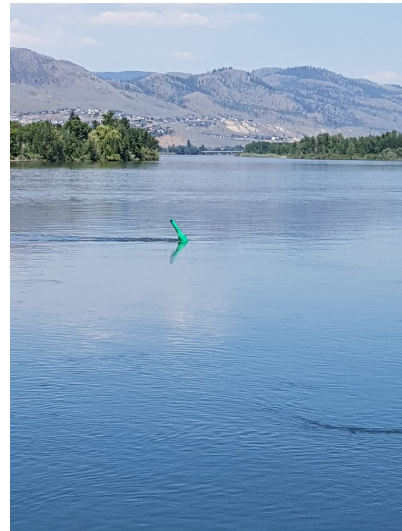


our old gal, Mattie. Brenda won't have any pups until the fall. As much as we would like another Golden, it's just not feasible right now. Perhaps when we leave the nomadic lifestyle, perhaps then. But not now.

Heading back, we drove down to the lake before heading to our campsite. What a pretty spot, complete with families of Canada geese.



The next morning we headed into downtown Kamloops. I had a college to call on. Afterwards we drove to Riverside Park, at the confluence of the swiftly-flowing North and South Thompson Rivers.



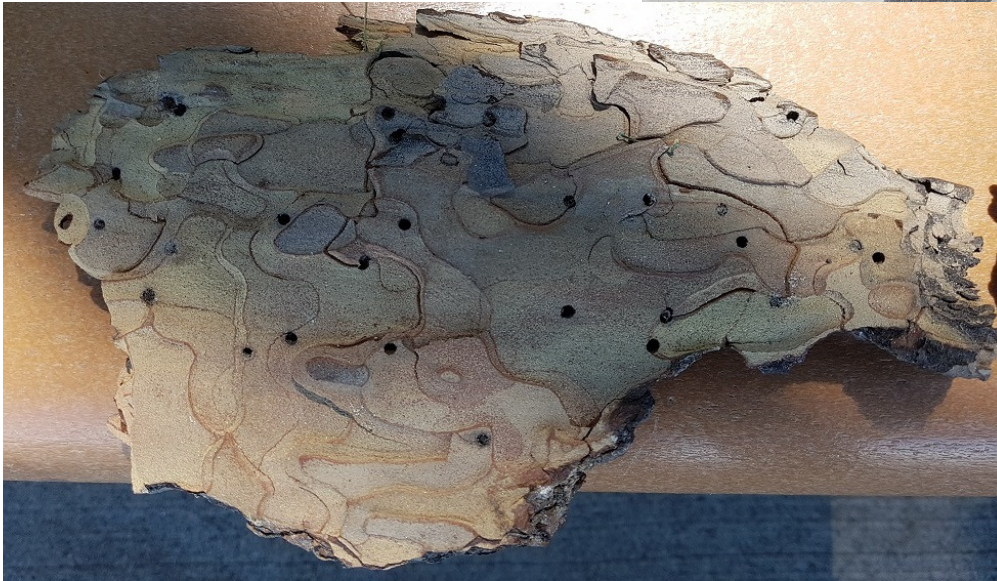
A sandy beach beckoned but we decided to walk the paved walkway for a while. When we ran out of shade trees, we headed back from whence we came.



We passed three stone markers on our walk. Brass strips, imbedded in one of the stone markers, indicate the height of recent floods – very fascinating.

While Jen looked on, I braved the river water. Brrrr the water was cold!! A couple of people took a dip, a bit like the polar bear swims on New Year's Day – in, out, quick, grab a towel.

I picked up this piece of "driftwood" as I walked back from the river. The numerous shapes and colours intrigued us both. I think it might be a work of art in hiding!



It's now Wednesday morning (June 20); time to move on. We've had an enjoyable stay at Paul Lake but the road is calling once again.

We hitched up Ali then headed east towards Pritchard. We'd come from Pritchard some years ago when snow was on the road so you can imagine our surprise when the paved road suddenly turned to gravel. As much as we dislike driving on gravel, we eventually made it to Pritchard.

At Pritchard we nervously drove across the one-lane bridge over the North Thompson river.



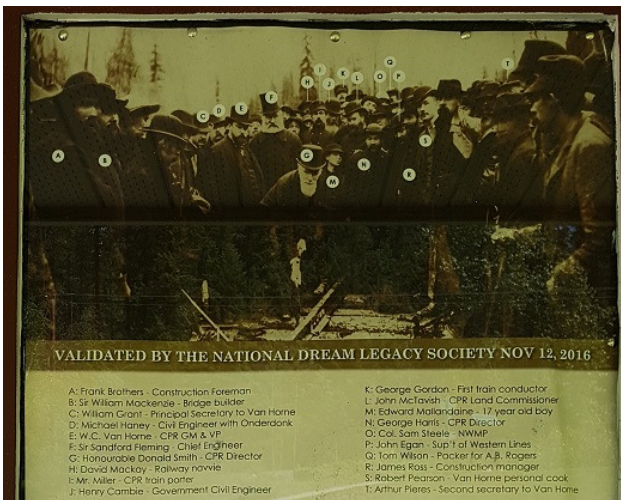
The day was getting hotter as we continued east on Hwy 1. At Salmon Arm, we went looking for the waterfront to no avail; the signs disappeared. After gassing up at Shell (the PetroCan was out of fuel), we turned off at Canoe and found the beach. With our coffee in hand, we sat on a park bench and admired the view.



Sufficiently suffocated, we continued our journey east. We turned off the highway at Sicamous and went looking for a coffee shop. We asked a local lady if there was a coffee shop around and about. "Tims" was her reply. Nope, not in that much of a hurry for a coffee. The roundabout was pretty to look at.



Next stop was Craigellachie. Now for those train buffs out there, this is where the last spike was driven on the Canadian Pacific Railway back in 1885. We had a bite of lunch and walked to the gift shop. Lots of neat "stuff"; one of the advantages of a small trailer—you have to have some place to put it! No space; no buy!



We pulled into Revelstoke and stopped by the Info Centre. Lots of RVs of varying sizes littered the main street. We decided to call one of the RV parks to enquire as to availability. We're in luck so off we went to Williamson Lake RV Park.



Later that afternoon we drove the Meadows in the Sky Parkway in Mount Revelstoke National Park. We could only drive 20 kms of the 26 km length as there was still snow on the road at the top. As the scenic view points we were treated to some spectacular sights and some historical information.



Mount Revelstoke Internment Camp

During World War 1, under the War Measures Act, internment camps were established at 24 locations across the country. About 8,000 people, mostly Ukrainians and other Europeans, were detained because they were considered to be "enemy aliens". Four of these camps were located in national parks at Banff, Jasper, Yoho and Mount Revelstoke.

Some citizens of Revelstoke urged the federal government to have internees complete the new road to the summit of Mount Revelstoke. The Dominion Parks Commissioner of the time, J.B. Harkin, agreed that they could provide a much-needed workforce for developing tourist facilities.

In 1915, an internment camp was built near this site. Weather conditions and labour disputes resulted in the men spending most of their time clearing snow and cutting firewood rather than working on road construction as had been expected. The water supply for the site was inadequate for the winter, so the internees were sent to Camp Otter in Yoho National Park, and the Mount Revelstoke camp was closed.

The Mighty Columbia River

The Columbia is the largest river flowing into the Pacific Ocean from North America. On the continent, only the Mississippi, Mackenzie, Yukon, St. Lawrence and Rio Grande rivers are larger.

The river begins at Columbia Lake near Fairmont Hot Springs. It winds 2,000 km through British Columbia, Washington and Oregon, and empties into the Pacific at Astoria, Oregon. The river's drainage basin is roughly the size of France.

Depending upon when you are visiting, the Columbia River below either looks like a long lake or a blue stream through wide green wetlands. This reach of the river is controlled by the Hugh Keenleyside power dam near Castlegar, 230 km south of here.

The Columbia River divides the Selkirk Mountains on the left from the Monashee Mountains on the right. You're standing on the extreme western flank of the Selkirks.

Symbol of the Snowforest

Endangered mountain caribou are one of the species best adapted to this environment. Caribou actually move higher up into the mountains as the snows get deeper. During the early winter they eat mountain boxwood in the old growth cedar and hemlock forests of the valleys. As the boxwood is buried by snow, caribou climb to the snowforest to find fresh food sources.

By mid-winter, caribou are high in the subalpine, feeding on lichens. They are able to spread their large hooves and dew claws to act like snowshoes. This allows them to stand on the 5 to 10 metre snowpack to feed on lichens that grow high in the tree branches. Caribou return to the valleys when the plants begin to green up in spring.

Threatened by the loss and disturbance of their habitat outside of the national parks, southern mountain caribou are a species on the edge of extinction. Parks Canada is working with neighbouring land managers to understand and reduce the stresses that affect mountain caribou.



Revelstoke's National Park

At the turn of the 20th Century, intrepid hikers from the newly incorporated City of Revelstoke climbed through heavy timber and thick underbrush to reach the top of neighbouring Mount Revelstoke. Soon, local citizens began making frequent pilgrimages to the mountain-top, delighted to find the subalpine meadows alive with the brilliant colour of mountain wildflowers. Mayor Charles Lindmark had his public works crews construct a trail from downtown Revelstoke to the summit of the mountain.

By 1911, local politicians and business people had recognized the scenic beauty and tourism potential of the mountain and convinced the provincial government to fund the construction of an auto road up the mountain. In 1914, the federal government was so impressed with the alpine splendour of the area and local efforts to preserve it, that it set aside 248 sq km of the high country as Revelstoke National Park.

Six years later, the park was renamed Mount Revelstoke National Park. It is one of only a few national parks in Canada to have been established at the request of local citizens.

Here Revelstoke found its park already laid out by nature without the intervention of any human landscape gardener.

A.O. Wheeler 1912

En ce lieu, Revelstoke a trouvé son parc, un endroit déjà aménagé par la nature, sans l'intervention d'aucun jardinier-paysagiste.



By the time we returned to Revelstoke it was definitely dinner time. We ate at Emo's. The food was good; the service was slow. The local craft beer was excellent.

The next morning (the first day of summer) we headed into Revelstoke to have a wander around. What a pretty downtown area; it reminded us of Smithers. We decided that we have to return to explore some more.



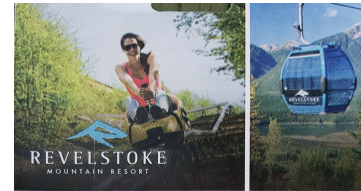


Later in the afternoon, we drove to Revelstoke Mountain Resort.




This is what Whistler looked like many years ago. The majority of the ski runs are Black (expert) but I came here to ride the Pipe Mountain Coaster.


On the way up the gondola, we saw glimpses of the track. Hmmm, looks fairly tame.



The Pipe 1 Ride
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Lower Gondola ONLY



The Pipe Mountain Coaster



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We stepped out of the gondola and strolled over to the Pipe. This ride twists and turns for 1.4 kms (0.87 mile) down a 279 meter (915') vertical drop at up to 42 km/h (26 mph)! Piece of cake!

Here I am at the starting point, happily oblivious to what is about to happen.



And then somewhere down the track...



Tomorrow, before we leave town, we're going to stop at the Revelstoke Railway Museum. Join us then.