

S/V Ubiquity Haida Gwaii Cruise

July-October, 2015

What Follows:

- Overall Trip Statistics
- Daily Log
- Detailed Log Entries

Overall Trip Statistics

90 Days total: Portland, Oregon back to Portland, Oregon
261.8 total engine hours

79 Days total: Astoria, Oregon, back to Astoria, Oregon
228.1 total engine hours
84.1 total gallons fuel use, Astoria back to Astoria

Total distance actually travelled not exactly known, but estimated at close to 2000 nm.

Daily Log

July 10, 2015: Portland, Captains Moorage, depart
July 10, 2015: Walker Island, arrive
July 12, 2015: Astoria, arrive
July 13, 2015: Columbia River Bar, cross
July 13, 2015: Westport, arrive
July 15, 2015: Westport, depart
July 15, 2015: Heave-to off WA coast night of July 15
July 17, 2015: Cape Flattery, round
July 17, 2015: Port Angeles, arrive
July 20, 2015: Sidney, arrive
July 21, 2015: Annette Inlet, Prevost Island, anchorage
July 22, 2015: North Cove, Thetis Island, anchorage
July 23, 2015: Nanaimo Harbour, arrive
July 25, 2015: Nanaimo Harbour, depart
July 25, 2015: Codfish Bay, Jedediah Island, anchorage
July 27, 2015: Codfish Bay, Jedediah Island, depart

July 27, 2015: Mouet Bay, Texada Island, anchorage
July 28, 2015: Campbell River, arrive
July 30, 2015: Campbell River, depart
July 30, 2015: Maud Island, anchor, temporary
July 30, 2015: Seymour Narrows, traverse
July 30, 2015: Otter Cove, anchorage
July 31, 2015: Blind Channel Resort, arrive
August 2, 2015: Blind Channel Resort, depart
August 2, 2015: Green Point Rapids, traverse
August 2, 2015: Whirlpool Rapids, traverse
August 2, 2015: Douglass Bay, Forward Harbour, anchorage
August 3, 2015: Gunner Point, anchor, temporary
August 3, 2015: McLeod Bay, anchorage
August 4, 2015: Port Harvey
August 5, 2015: Hansen Island, anchorage
August 6, 2015: Pearse Island, anchorage, excellent
August 7, 2015: Port McNeil
August 11, 2015: Port McNeil, depart
August 11, 2015: Walker Island, anchorage
August 12, 2015: Cape Caution, round
August 12, 2015: Fury Cove, Penrose Island, anchorage
August 13, 2015: Kwakume Inlet, anchorage
August 14, 2015: Shearwater Resort, Denny Island
August 15, 2015: Day Point, Price Island, anchorage
August 16, 2015: Ramsbotham Island, Larado Channel, anchorage
August 17, 2015: Harwood Bay, Campania Island, anchorage
August 18, 2015: Monckton Inlet, anchorage
August 19, 2015: Monckton Inlet, anchorage
August 20, 2015: Colby Cove, Banks Island, anchorage
August 21, 2015: Keswar Inlet, anchorage
August 22, 2015: Keswar Inlet, anchorage
August 23, 2015: Hecate Strait, cross
August 23, 2015: Sandspit Harbour
September 1, 2015: Sandspit Harbour, depart
September 1, 2015: Thurston Harbour, anchorage
September 2, 2015: Echo Harbour, anchorage
September 3, 2015: Konstan Inlet, anchorage
September 4, 2015: Ikeda Cove, anchorage
September 6, 2015: Ikeda Cove, depart
September 6, 2015: Rose Harbour, arrive
September 9, 2015: Rose Harbour, depart
September 10, 2015: Queen Charlotte Sound, lie ahull
September 11, 2015: San Josef Bay, entered after midnight, fog/dark, no radar
September 11, 2015: Grant Bay, anchorage
September 12, 2015: Brooks Peninsula, round in gale warning

September 12, 2015: Catala Island, anchorage
September 13, 2015: Westview Marina, Tahsis
September 16, 2015: Westview Marina, Tahsis, depart
September 16, 2015: Santa Gertrudis Cove, whales!
September 17, 2015: Estavan Point, round
September 17, 2015: Hot Springs Cove
September 18, 2015: Hoot-la-Kootla Cove, Flores Island, anchorage
September 20, 2015: Hoot-la-Kootla Cove, Flores Island, depart
September 20, 2015: Ritchie Bay, anchorage
September 21, 2015: Ucluelet
September 28, 2015: Ucluelet, depart
September 30, 2015: Columbia River Bar, cross
September 30, 2015: Astoria
October 2, 2015: Astoria, depart
October 2, 2015: Cathlamet
October 5, 2015: Cathlamet, depart
October 6, 2015: Rainer
October 7, 2015: Sand Island, St. Helens
October 8, 2015: Portland, Captains Moorage

Detailed Trip Log Entries

August 17, 2015

N 52 deg 48.2'

W 129 deg 10.2'

In Loredo Channel northbound. Crossing Camamano Sound shortly.

This is very wild, remote country. We are off the regular Inside Passage route, and we are alone. Last two anchorages have been incredibly remote. Eagle sightings are common. Have had some excellent sailing conditions.

We are looking to cross Hecate Strait, which is known as a rough body of water. Because gale-force winds are forecast tomorrow, we intend to continue northbound east of Banks Island in Principe Channel, and will be looking at crossing Hecate possibly on Thursday or Friday, leaving from the north end of Banks Island. Could therefore arrive as early as Thursday evening in Sandspit, Haida Gwaii, God willing. Likely will be later.

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August 22, 2015

N 53 deg 38.4'

W 130 deg 20.5'

Anchored in Keswar Inlet on McCauley Island, just north of Keswar Point, several miles east of the north end of Banks Island.

Yesterday, Friday, we had a short, easy sail to this anchorage, seeing no other boats in this incredibly remote, rugged, beautiful terrain. Knowing a front was arriving in the evening with gale warnings for Hecate Strait, just to our west, we set a good anchor in this protected anchorage to wait out the weather.

If this anchorage were in the San Juan or Gulf Islands, there would be lots of boats anchored here with us, but instead, we are alone with the gulls and the eagles. It's a perfect anchorage to wait out this weather front, with good protection, lots of room, and excellent holding. When we arrived yesterday afternoon it was tranquil here, but by early a.m. the winds were howling as forecasted. We've experienced gusts into the 20's, while out on Hecate winds are about 35. The anchorage here is very comfortable, with the sound of the rain on the roof and the dodger, and the boat swinging and bobbing a little with the gusts. Leslie is reading up on Haida Guaii right now, lying on a settee covered with a blanket and the reading light on.

It appears we will likely get a good weather window to cross to Sandspit in the next several days. I need to download up-dated weather info, but right now I expect we will probably need to sit here at anchor today and tomorrow to let conditions on Hecate Strait settle, with a crossing possibly on Monday. If we could cross on Monday, that would give me three days in Sandspit before I fly out on Friday.

I intend to get a rental car in Sandspit for the entire time there, so I can make the most of the days I have there and so Leslie can also for the time I am gone. I hope that when I connect on radio to upload this message I will then download an email from one of you with Sandspit rental car info as I requested.

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September 3, 2015

N 52 deg 34.82'

W 131 deg. 42.33

Anchored in Kostan Inlet, Moresby Island, Haida Qwaii. Kostan Inlet is off of Darwin Sound, just north of Juan Perez Sound.

We left Sandspit early on Tuesday, Sept. 1, and now are about 1/2 way down the east side of Moresby Island.

Scenery, wildlife, remotenes, wildness of the terrain have all been spectacular.

Have seen whales, seals, deer, raccoons, eagles (at every anchorage), fish jumping, jelly fish, and evidence of bear (tracks and scat) when we dinghyed ashore, but no bear.

The anchorages have had cliffs and impressive mountains towering above, pristine, with no other people or boats anywhere. The eagles are ubiquitous; using binoculars we watch them in the trees and sunning themselves in the morning on the rocks.

Leslie really wanted to see a bear so we dinghyed ashore in our anchorage this morning, because the guidebook warned of the bear habitat in the trees off of the shore. We walked carefully through the grass and the trees, and came across several deer, and lots of bearpaw prints in the mud, and scat that I think was bear, but never saw a bear.

We are enjoying this part of the trip and don't want to rush it, but are aware that on a sailboat in the remote areas of the Haida Gwaii in September we are taking some risk of having serious weather close in on us and stop us. October is the wettest month in Haida Gwaii. The northwest coast of Vancouver Island has weekly gale-force winds even in the summer at Cape Scott and Brooks Peninsula, which we must pass on our way to Ucluelet. The extended weather forecasts make it look like we could have a possible weather window to do the passage from the southern end of Haida Gwaii to the northern end of Vancouver Island on Sunday/Monday, so we intend to proceed more expeditiously south to take that window if it materializes.

We have fresh food again so are eating well. Still have fresh produce. Made spaghetti for dinner tonight. Just say no to Ramen!

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September 4, 2015
N 52 deg 33'
W 131 deg 30'

Motoring in Juan Perez Sound. Beautiful, clear, calm weather, but that will change tonight/tomorrow.

Change of weather forecasts and change of plans.... Gale-force winds forecast for front coming through tomorrow has us headed now for Ikeda Cove, a sheltered anchorage to wait out the weather. Weather for passage to Vancouver Island now looks delayed until Tues/Wed.

Just saw a group of ~8 whale spouts in the distance. Did not see them again.

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September 4, 2015

N 52 deg 17.72'

W 131 deg 9.44'

Anchored in Ikeda Cove.

Last night the anchorage we were in had a shallow, constricted entrance that we had to enter and exit at high tide. At high tide the water is deepest (duh) and the tidal flow is slack (not flowing). The entrance involved jogging left and right around several boulders. We used a guidebook, the chartplotters (not very accurate for that level of detail in these waters), and Leslie was at the bow when entering and exiting giving me her observations via the radio headset.

Once in that anchorage it felt completely protected and isolated, like a lake. Beautiful, like all of the anchorages here. And of course the anchorages here we always have to ourselves, whereas beautiful anchorages like this in the San Juans would have dozens of boats (Actually, none of the San Juan anchorages are as beautiful as these with the mountain, rugged, and unspoiled scenery.

Today we transited the entrance out of Kostan Inlet at 7:00 a.m., shortly after high slack, and in no-wind, but beautiful, sunny, calm conditions motored to Ikeda Cove. This is a very protected anchorage with excellent holding, and a good place to wait out strong weather. Rain and gale-force winds are forecasted to arrive with a frontal system tonight/tomorrow, and we will probably stay in Ikeda tomorrow waiting out the weather. I set a bombproof anchor with double snubbers.

The winds appear to be building up already at our anchorage.

Ikeda would serve well as a departure point for the passage to Vancouver Island. Or we could move to Rose Harbour and depart from there. We will be monitoring the weather updates and I will be analyzing our alternatives closely.

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September 5, 2015

N 52 deg 17.7'

W 131 deg 9.4'

Anchored in Ikeda Cove

On the bright side: Food and libation stores on S/V Ubiquity are still bountiful. Happy hour on S/V Ubiquity occurs dutifully at 16:00, when not underway. The crew has ample reading material. The captain is reading a biography of Robert Oppenheimer. S/V Ubiquity is safely at anchor with a good anchor set.

On the dark side: Rain and winds buffeted S/V Ubiquity last night, although now we are in a lull. Gale warnings and strong-wind warnings are issued for Hecate Strait, Queen Charlotte Sound, and the west coasts of Haida Gwaii and Vancouver Island today and tomorrow.

We are looking closely for a reasonable weather window to sail to north Vancouver Island, but given the current forecast outlook a departure before Tuesday looks unlikely.

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September 5, 2015

N 52 deg 17.7'

W 131 deg 9.4'

Anchored in Ikeda Cove

Still assessing the weather prospects for making the passage to north Vancouver Island. Besides the short-term and long-term Canadian marine forecasts (We can also get via VHF weather radio - although not very clear at this location, we can get it if we listen several times) I downloaded grib files showing computer forecasts of wind speed/direction and wave heights for the next three days.

After the rain stopped this morning, it has actually been nice in Ikeda Cove, although a bit blustery. We got out the dinghy, went to shore, and were able to hike through some beautiful meadow and rain forest type terrain. Very lush. Saw several deer, one lying on green meadow who seemed unperturbed by our hiking by. No bear sightings, to Leslie's disappointment.

The deer here are another variety that is smaller, noticeably smaller, than deer in the states. In the dinghy two days ago we came close (~30') to a deer lying down in brush; she seemed unperturbed by our presence in the dinghy, although a deer on-shore (Could have been the same deer) would not let us get closer than about 100' when walking on-shore.

Apparently some of our anchorages are more favorable eagle habitat than others, although it is not obvious to me why. At Thurston Harbour we literally saw dozens of eagles. In the morning we could see groups of them, some mature (white heads) and other immature (all brown) sunning themselves on the rocks, and we could spot the mature eagles in the trees (The immature ones blend in too well; the mature ones you can spot because of their white heads). However, at this anchorage, which to me looks like quite similar habitat, there are no eagles.

Seals have been in all anchorages, and they will come close to the boat when fishing.

Besides the shore outing, activity on S/V Ubiquity has been muted - mainly reading, plus my working at the nav station on my computer and with the nautical charts, punctuated

by wildlife sight-seeing from the cockpit. Leslie has been using the binoculars looking at the meadow areas on the shore; she especially is looking for bear. Last night we saw four deer.

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September 7, 2015

N 52 deg. 9.0'

W 131 deg. 5.2'

Rose Harbour, several miles north of Cape Saint James, the southern end of the Haida Gwaii Islands.

S/V Ubiquity is hanging securely on a mooring buoy placed here by the B.C. Parks Dept., in the protection of Rose Harbour. The harbour gives good wind protection, and there is a light swell penetrating the harbour. The rain and wind has been less than we expected, given the gale warnings that Environment Canada has issued for all the waters around us. The "harbour" term is misleading: What we see from the boat is wilderness-like except for three houses visible on-shore, two skiffs and a fishing boat on private mooring buoys near the houses, and the ruins of the 1800's whaling station on the shore (some huge rusty tanks).

We are monitoring the weather looking for a reasonable chance to sail to Vancouver Island. The strong SE winds and gale forecasts are not what we want. We may need to wait at Rose Harbour a while. Once we get a weather window we are willing to take, we likely will make a longer passage than we originally intended - not just to the north end of Vancouver Island, but probably to the middle, south of Brooks Peninsula, maybe to Catala Island, an anchorage we used two years ago with an active sea otter colony. While on passage I will probably not send any radio emails, but will after arriving.

On the hygiene front, we both washed up yesterday after arriving in Rose Harbour. I put on a set of new underwear, the first in six days since leaving Sandspit, whether I needed it or not. Leslie has not been as frugal as me, as she reported having changed previously several times.

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September 8, 2015

N 52 deg. 9.0'

W 131 deg. 5.2'

At Rose Harbour, several miles north of Cape Saint James, the southern end of the Haida Gwaii Islands.

BTW, when we left Ikeda Cove we sailed off the anchor, and had excellent sailing in strong conditions all the way to the entrance to Rose Harbour. Approached Rose Harbour we were treated with numerous whale sightings. What wild and grand country!

Weather: The cold front that brought us high winds and rain yesterday, and gale warnings on the sounds, has passed through and it is now calm with occasional light showers in Rose Harbour. S/V Ubiquity is gently rolling in the swell. However, another cold front will be moving through Haida Gwaii bringing high winds, higher seas, and new gale warnings later today. Today S/V Ubiquity's crew will continue preparing the boat for the up-coming offshore passage, and doing personal reading; the captain is still reading an excellent biography of Robert Oppenheimer, "American Prometheus, the Triumph and Tragedy of Robert Oppenheimer". Current wind forecasts look excellent for leaving tomorrow, Wednesday, for the passage to Vancouver Island, but wave height forecasts show high seas building up today and still high tomorrow, so leaving tomorrow we expect we may encounter rough conditions, especially the first day. We will evaluate all weather forecasts and observations carefully between now and tomorrow morning, but as of now we expect to leave Rose Harbour for Vancouver Island tomorrow, Wednesday. Our intention is sail south past the Brooks Peninsula, taking advantage of expected favorable NW winds in that area, and likely make landfall seeking anchorage at Catala Island, where we anchored and observed sea otters two years ago. That passage is over 200 nm and we expect to probably take two nights, arriving at Catala on Friday, if we leave Rose Harbour tomorrow, Wednesday.

After arriving at Catala and resting, and hopefully enjoying the sea otters, we intend to go inland to Tahsis and enjoy the amenities at the Westview Marina. If we go there, I plan to take a shower, and change my underwear, whether I need it or not.

If we depart Rose Harbour tomorrow morning, you should not expect communications from S/V Ubiquity before we arrive at Catala or Tahsis. At Tahsis (Saturday?) we should have internet. You might get phone (facetime audio or Skype) calls from us. Or photos/videos!

Rum report: One bottle of Black Seal rum is now empty, but a full bottle remains. Like the sailors in the British Navy, the crew of S/V Ubiquity still receives its rum ration.

2:00 p.m. update - Since the morning heavier rain and higher winds returned to Rose Harbour, consistent with the forecasts. The wind now howls off-and-on through the rigging, and the boat heels slightly and rotates one way and then the other with the vagaries of the swirling winds. Activity on S/V Ubiquity is muted, mainly reading.

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September 9, 2015

About 20 nm south of Cape Saint James.

Underway in big seas. Can not write more, but wanted to get online to download weather info.

Will definitely let you know when we reach Tahsis. Expect to reach Catala Island about Friday, Tahsis about Sat.

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September 11, 2015

N 50 deg 40.1'

W 128 deg 17.8'

Anchored in San Josef Bay, west coast, north Vancouver Island, Sept. 11, 2015.

This is an incredibly beautiful, wild anchorage. Surf is breaking on the rocks around us, and to the SW we look out the bay's entrance to the Pacific Ocean, whence we entered at midnight last night. The head of the bay has a beautiful, sandy beach juxtaposed against the starkness of the rocks, the massive fields of driftlogs on the shores, and the evergreens ascending the peaks.

The passage from Rose Harbour, Haida Gwaii, beat us up at first with the seas left over from the gales. Leslie got sick - photos coming later when we have internet. I expected for a while to end my record of never getting sick offshore on a sailboat. Besides the seas being fairly big, they were confused, with a predominantly SW swell mixing with a secondary SE swell/wind waves.

After getting beaten up all of Thursday, at midnight I called for lying ahull, partly for both of us to rest and partly to try it. "Lying ahull" is an old storm tactic that I consider largely discredited for serious storm survival, but I wanted to see how it worked in our conditions. Lying ahull means dropping all sails and letting the boat fend for herself. In serious storm conditions you would put in the hatch boards and probably pray; on Thursday we left the boards out and just tried to wedge ourselves in somehow so we wouldn't roll around. Leslie was in the quarterberth, which is fairly tight, so was able to wedge herself in with an extra sleeping bag and curled up with her "legs bracing me from side-to-side". I got on the cabin sole and tried to wedge myself between the settees athwartships to stop from being tossed around too much to sleep. Despite the uncomfortable, jerky movement we both got quite a lot of sleep, but very intermittent, and stayed lying ahull from about 0000 to 0700.

When lying ahull I'm pretty sure I heard a whale spout/breathe nearby. We had numerous whale sightings on both Wed/Thurs on the passage.

A treat on the passage was the display by the albatrosses. We must have been in great albatross habitat, because they were ubiquitous. Majestically soaring the waves, barely off the water, going in-and-out of sight in the wave valleys, they put on incredible displays of soaring for us on both days. I tried to shoot video of them.

Damn the equipment! I try so hard to do top-quality installation of all equipment I put into the boat, and it exasperates me when it fails. Last night the radar failed. Not a good time. We sailed into San Josef Bay last night completely blind. It was hours before moonrise and it was absolutely dark. Bashing through the waves at 6 knots in gusty winds we could hear the surf breaking around us, meaning the boat's demise, and likely our own, awaited us on both sides if we navigated onto the rocks. That's when I wanted the damn radar to work to confirm our position. We did get several sightings of the flashing beacon at the Sea Otter Cove entrance, giving us a relative bearing that confirmed our location on the chartplotters. After we got into calmer seas in San Josef Bay and I had wrestled down the mainsail, I put Leslie at the bow with a walkie-talkie headset so she could get her night vision while I navigated the boat to the anchorage using the chartplotters and depth soundings. She reported only being able to see "maybe ten feet" ahead, but it was still comforting to have a lookout, since using the chartplotters I lost my night vision. I did try using the 100,000 cp searchlight, but it just reflected white off the near-fog in the air. Leslie rated the tenseness of the whole experience as a "9 out of 10". I had chosen to go into San Josef Bay because the entrance to the anchorage was straight-forward, in contrast to Sea Otter Cover, so was safer entering at night with no radar. In the end, the strategy worked perfectly, and this morning we could witness the beautiful, stark setting we had navigated into in utter darkness last night.

We are recovering now, and re-organizing the boat, in San Josef Bay. May move to Grant Bay, about 15 nm south, this afternoon, to set up the passage around Brooks Peninsula to Catala Island tomorrow. We now have the NW winds that we wanted, which we unfortunately did not have on the passage from Haida Gwaii. The NW winds are building, with gale warnings for the west coast of Vancouver Island, but with the winds going with us we can take stronger winds and bigger seas. My tentative plan is to round Brooks Peninsula (notorious for its winds and seas) early tomorrow before the forecasted strengthening of the NW winds tomorrow afternoon. We will of course carefully make our decisions based on updated weather forecasts and observations (both marine VHF weather radio and HF radio forecast and grib file downloads), and our on-boat observations (barometer and visual).

After the Catala Island anchorage, we will be in sea otter country and look forward to their company. We intend to head then to Tashis to enjoy the luxuries at the Westview Marina (Dorothy - I intend to take a shower and change underclothes, whether I need it or not). Heading south in Tashis Inlet and exiting Nootka Sound, we will round Estavan Point intending to arrive at Ucluelet before Sept. 25, when Jill will arrive there intending to crew on S/V Ubiquity for the passage to Astoria.

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September 16, 2015

N 49 deg 36.1'

W 126 deg 37.3'

Anchored in Santa Gertrudis Cove, just north of the Nootka lighthouse, entrance to Nootka Sound. 59 straight-line miles NW of Ucluelet.

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Saw sea otters, bears, and whales today traveling south from Tahsis.

Motoring south in Tahsis Inlet in no wind, S/V Ubiquity passed dozens of sea otters swimming, diving, and floating on their backs. Most would swim away slowly as the boat approached, but several seemed curious and actually swam towards the boat and swam beside us in the same direction. While I was below, Leslie saw one "doing somersaults next to the boat", and she was convinced that he was trying to keep up with the boat and show off. I always enjoy the company of these docile and friendly creatures, which were hunted to extinction and have now been re-introduced into these waters.

Bears - Leslie was elated when she spotted a bear on the shore. Then shortly afterwards I spotted one ahead. When she looked through the binoculars she reported three bears were on the shore in the meadow, a big one and two cubs. I cut the engine to idle and we slowly closed on the shore near them. They seemed nonchalant about us and we passed them by, and then all of a sudden the mother started running towards the woods and the two cubs took off following. One of the cubs stumbled and fell down by a log. The mother stopped and looked towards the cub, and then the cub got up and ran fast with his short legs and all the bears disappeared into the woods.

Then up ahead near the end of Tahsis Inlet we saw whales spouting in the distance. Using binoculars we estimated eight whales. We passed the point we had seen them and they were gone. We saw several spouting in the direction we were not going. We turned west into Nootka Sound and after a while a whale spouted ahead on the right, then I saw one on the left, and then suddenly we realized we had stumbled into the group we had seen from the distance. I turned off the motor and we floated with the group of about eight whales surfacing, spouting, and apparently feeding around us in all directions. They did not seem to care that we were there. We made sandwiches and lunched while the whales continued to feed around us, a communion in purpose of two mammals, however disparate in size.

While I was trying to shoot video of the whales, suddenly a whale BROACHED - yes, broached, came up out of the water. I had never seen a whale broach. It was incredible, majestic, and primordially terrifying. Then a whale broached again. We saw two broaches close, maybe 100 yards, and another further away. I did not get video of an entire broach, but I did get video of the aftermath, the splash and the waves, plus my expression of amazement.

These waters teem with life, and we also saw salmon jumping, seals, sea lions, and lots of waterfowl today, but the sea otters, bears, and whales gave us the most enjoyment.

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September 18, 2015

N 49 deg 21.9'

W 126 deg 13.8'

Anchored in a small cove on Flores Island, just north of the entrance to Sydney Inlet, about 1.5 nm east of Hot Springs Cove.

Yesterday we rounded Point Estavan on the Hesquiat Peninsula, the last of the three major capes forming obstacles to the mariner traversing the west coast of Vancouver Island. Although not as formidable or as notorious as Cape Scott or Cape Cook (Brooks Peninsula), Point Estavan deserves respect as it can generate nasty seas and winds. Yesterday Estavan was benign. From Nootka sound we motored into a gentle SW swell to round the cape, and once rounded got light sailing winds, sailing very slowly towards Hot Springs Cove. In the light winds and slow sailing Leslie took a nap below and I read in the cockpit.

We decided to moor at the dock in Hot Springs Cove last night. Something is new there - a floating restaurant at the dock on an old fishing boat with a dining area on an attached float. The older couple running it produce excellent home-cooked food for the tourists, although with a limited menu. Since the tourist season is ending, this was almost their last day before closing the restaurant. Besides their food, I enjoyed talking to them about the difficulties in starting that business and their take on different types of tourists; for example - Chinese, very pushy (sometimes they have trouble keeping them out of their private living quarters on the boat); Japanese, more polite and refined; Americans and Canadians, almost no difference, except that Canadians complain more about prices.

When docking at Hot Springs Cove we met a group of Canadian reserve Rangers (sort of a Navy reserve group), operating an old 75' wood training boat, that I had noticed in Nootka Sound, and also going into Hot Springs Cove, and had mis-identified as a retired mine-sweeper that now operates as a supply boat for the Indian villages. They were a jovial group and at my request they gave us a tour of the old training boat. With its high freeboard the deck of the boat was about five feet above the dock, and unfortunately I got no photos when several of the rangers and I were pulling to get Leslie up on the boat, and later helping to get her down.

This morning Leslie left Ubiquity about 7:00 a.m. to hike to the hot springs, wanting to be the first one there today. The tourist boats bringing people in from Tofino do not start arriving until about 9:00. The hike to the hot springs is 2 km over a planked raised path through lush jungle-like vegetation. It is really a world-class tourist attraction that draws tourists from around the world, including people flying in on float planes. Despite her early departure Leslie was not the first one at the hot springs; four people camping in the tent area near the dock were just leaving when she arrived. She did enjoy the hot springs

to herself then and was getting out when I arrived, so I had them to myself also. At the hot springs you can stand under a "hot springs shower" where the water cascades over the rocks, and can also soak in the pools.

Hiking out from the hot springs the first tourists from the tour boats were hiking in, and more boats kept coming when Ubiquity departed the docks headed for the nearby quiet but roly anchorage where Ubiquity now lies at anchor.

Ucluelet lies 38 straight-line nm to the SE, but the distance Ubiquity needs to travel is about 47 nm, which is a full day for Ubiquity, especially with the ever-diminishing daylight time. We will be making the off-shore hop to Ucluelet when we judge the weather favorable, possibly tomorrow.

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September 19, 2015

N 49 deg 21.9'

W 126 deg 13.8'

Anchored in a small cove on Flores Island, just north of the entrance to Sydney Inlet, about 1.5 nm east of Hot Springs Cove.

Started raining hard last night beginning 0100. Still raining now. Foggy. Wind forecasts not good for sailing to Ucluelet today. Wind direction not good. Gale warning in effect.

Staying at this beautiful, remote-feeling, but roly anchorage today. Tomorrow we will either leave for Ucluelet or take an inside route around Flores Island to the anchorage at Ritchie Bay, about 4 nm north of Tofino. The Ritchie Bay anchorage would put us substantially closer for the passage to Ucluelet.

Although we will be reviewing weather information later today and tomorrow morning to make a go/no-go decision to head for Ucluelet tomorrow, right now it appears more likely that S/V Ubiquity will not arrive at Ucluelet until Monday or Tuesday. If we do make a go decision tomorrow morning and do not like the off-shore conditions we have the option to bail out by taking Russell Channel north of Vargas Island, ending up at Ritchie Bay (by the outside instead of inside route).

Having finished the weather assessments for now, S/V Ubiquity's crew members have turned to their respective reading interests.

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Overall Trip Statistics

September 20, 2015

N 49 deg 13.5'

W 125 deg 54.0'

Anchored in Ritchie Bay, about 4 nm north of Tofino.

Last night was another rainy, foggy, and high-wind night at anchor. Early this morning it was raining and foggy, but the rain and fog gradually dissipated, and by late morning it was turning into a nice day. With gale warnings still off the west coast of south Vancouver Island, we did not venture sea-ward, but instead took the inside route around Flores Island, Then skirted the north edge of Vargas Island (look at a map or chart and you will see it is exposed to the sea) in winds to the upper 20's, spray over the bow and into the cockpit, and the boat racing at hull speed rounding the rocks with waves breaking big on them.

Now anchored at a pristine, fairly sheltered nook, on Ritchie Bay. The remnants of the gale-force winds howl off-and-on through the rigging and the boat bobs gently in the slight swell.

Tomorrow looks like a good day to do the offshore passage to Ucluelet, so I expect Ubiquity will probably be in the Ucluelet Harbour by late afternoon. The straight-line distance to Ucluelet Small Boat Harbour is now only 23.5 nm. However, the total sailing distance from here to there is about 33 nm.

Ucluelet's amenities beckon Ubiquity and her crew.