

SUN 28.8.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

In the morning it was wet and rainy once again; temperature 8°C. Before breakfast I lit a fire in the



wood-burning stove and just could not resist taking a photo of it, as back at home I used to use a very similar stove. I designed it with a help of my Dutch friend Ruud, who himself had been using Norwegian JOTUL N118 stove. Before 1989 no Jotul stove could be bought in CR. To build my model, which we called GOLEM, I used the locally available materials, and my father in law did the work. After 1989, I had sold the plans of GOLEM to a proper fire-stove company and for the money I got for GOLEM, I bought myself a bus ticket to London and started my turfculture/horticulture business. GOLEM lasted me for 25 years and now at last, I am a proud owner of JOTUL N118.

After breakfast we went for a short walk- to see these old railway pillars, which were right behind our camp.

Info board: Railway disaster at Rogers Pass in 4.3.1910, 58 workers were killed in Canada's worst avalanche accident. Railway Line to Roger's Pass was build through 2,500 m of snow-shed and 400m of tunnels.

The builders made it to Roger Pass in August 1885-made it through 8 months of avalanches, forest fires, rainstorms and mudslides.

In order to minimize disruption to rail traffic, the stone pillars were constructed inside the timber framework of the trestle while the line was still active.



It had been raining the whole day and night. In the morning we noticed fresh snow high up in the mountains.



This wooden restroom was fantastic, just look at the comfort



Before leaving the camp I went to say farewell to that sympathetic young family - Johnas, his wife and his two small kids. Here is Johnas with his son.

Just a few notes on that splendid red wine offered by Johnas last evening. It was produced at **Okanagan Valley**, the second largest Canadian wine region, located within the region of the same name. Along with the nearby Similkameen Valley, the approximately 4,000 hectares of vineyards planted in the Okanagan account for more than 90% of all wine produced in British Columbia and are second in economic importance for wine production to the Niagara Peninsula of Ontario. Vineyards can be found all along 135 km-long Okanagan Lake and many of its neighbouring lakes, including Osoyoos Lake, Skaha Lake and Vaseux Lake. The Okanagan has diverse terrain that features many different microclimates and vineyard soil types,

contributing characteristics which are part of an Okanagan territory.



Wine production in the Okanagan dates to the 1850s, with the establishment of Okanagan Mission and the planting of grapevines to supply sacramental wines. In the early 20th century, prohibition in Canada wiped out many of the Okanagan's earliest wineries and the commercial wine industry in the area was not revived until the 1930s. From this time through the mid-1970s, the Okanagan wine industry was based entirely on the production of fruit wines and those produced from hybrid grapes. Okanagan Lake helps moderate the climate in the Okanagan region which receives very little rainfall throughout the year.

Saying farewell to Johnas, we continued westward until we arrived to the city of Revelstoke, founded in the 1880s when the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) was built through the area; mining was an important early industry. The city population is 7,139 and it is situated on the banks of the Columbia River, some 641 kilometres east of Vancouver. Revelstoke holds the Canadian record for snowiest single winter. During the winter 1971-72 the incredible amount of 2447 cm of snow fell on

Mt. Copeland outside town of 1971-72. The town itself received 779 cm and snow levels were higher than many roofs around town by more than a few metres.



Revelstoke cemetery

Any local cemetery always provides a window into the past; so as we were passing it, we went to have a look, just as a matter of interest. There was a lady there raking leaves/grass, and while I was reading the writings on the gravestones, VP asked her the correct time (being a little confused what with crossing time-zones), from that moment, the good woman just could not stop talking to us. She was a kind person and enjoyed talking to us, or just needed to talk to someone. However, we were in a bit

of a hurry to get to the Mt. Revelstone. She knew the mountain and said to us: “You’ll be going up, and up, and up...” And she was right as we were soon to find out.



If I were to compare the cemeteries in Europe with those in USA / Canada, one striking difference would be the size of them and the size of the actual individual plots, these are much bigger over here. Also, most of the gravestones are laid in the ground, or should I say in turf

Up at the Mt. Revelstoke, it was a bit crowded, and car parks were full. This had been a problem in most of the NP car parks, and people just park their cars on the road verge. On that particular day there was a long-distance cross-country race, and as it

happened the trail was diverted because of bears who were feeding on berries. Can you imagine running through the land where there are bears all over feeding on berries? I can’t!



Revelstoke from Mount Revelstoke National Park

When we returned back to town, we had bought some grilled chicken at a supermarket, ate it in our car, and then went for a cup of coffee served at petrol station. Feeling much better, we then decided to buy a bottle of red Canadian wine for Paul, our friend in Vancouver. I chose the very same brand as we drank last night with Johnas.



MacKenzie Avenue, Revelstoke

Driving west (over 600km to go to Vancouver, yet!) through the land which was more or less very boring, now and again there was this sign on Hwy: **R.P.A.P. = Report Poachers And Polluters.**

It was getting on and we needed to find a camp. Driving for several hours, we could see no village, no town, just vast empty spaces. Luckily in the evening we approached a little town Merritt, and soon found a camp. But it

looked deserted with only some old caravans, in which perhaps someone might have been living, or if so, then just a few people. No good! As, I remembered passing a visitor centre on the main highway, just before Merritt, and returned to it. Luckily it was still opened (although it was about 7 p.m.). The rangers were most helpful and directed us to the right camp, which was immediately behind the one we've just been to.

It was Moon Shadow camp RV @ 25.20 CAD, by the local river, well equipped – hot showers, TV room, shop, battery charging facilities, the lot.

I had driven 6581 km.

MON 29.8.



Merritt (population 8,000) as seen from a hillside northwest of the city

Quite warm this morning, 10°C. VP had tried once again to phone Paul, but no luck. Our phones had been totally useless over here. Because tonight we would be sleeping at Paul's, we got rid of cartoon paper on which our airbeds were laid on. There was quite a lot of it and we left it behind restrooms, close to bins which would be emptied by service. Finally, we disposed of all unwanted

rubbish, had a good shave and put on clean shirts. Back to civilization!

Driving to Vancouver we came to a about 1-2 hour standstill on our highway. Next to us was parked a typical huge lorry: 63.5 t + trailer; length 17m.

I liked the signboard, what a good place "HOPE" must be to live in! I also managed to sort out my SAT-NAV, as without it we would have no chance to get to Paul's house. I needed my car navigation only at Portland (but it did not work there) and now to get to Paul's place (and it did work). Actually, I was going to need it even for the third time - to get us from Paul's house to the



Vancouver Airport, and it was going to work, too. At the outskirts of Vancouver we stopped for a bloody good lunch at Dixie Lee Restaurant (I did remember that excellent chain of restaurants since my trip on ROUTE 66), arriving to Paul's shortly after lunch.

Vancouver Skyline



I had seen very little of Vancouver as such, (staying at Victoria), so I asked Paul's wife Sharon whether she could join me for a trip to the city, and she agreed. She used to live right in the middle of it and knew all the roads, even

the smallest ones. We parked at the seashore and had a little stroll, looking at the harbour and museums which were closing down, since it was after 5 p.m. Sharon talked about her youth, how she was a part of a hippie community, she talked about her travelling adventures and about her work at Vancouver hospital. It was a lovely and relaxing afternoon. For the last time I got some petrol to get us to the airport the next day.



In the evening we enjoyed the most delicious food prepared by Paul. He appreciated the bottle of Canadian Merlot, and, you've guessed it, he opened the bottle we brought to him

Paul was a great help to us. His knowledge of local life and his advice on various aspects of our plan was invaluable, too. And finally, since he could speak Czech (he immigrated to Canada as a young man) and at the same time being a top-class alpine plant collector (see his garden), VP had found a great partner for endless

discussions. Good for me, too, as I just listened, listened and listened. How relaxing after such an exciting, incredible, eventful and active time!

I had driven 7018km.

TUE 30.8.

After the first good sleep for weeks, Paul cooked an excellent breakfast, helped us to clean our car and replace the rear seats, which were deposited in his garage. Around midday we left for the Vancouver airport. Good job my SAT-NAV was working or else we'd have no chance to get there in time. No problem with returning the car, the only charge was for the full petrol tank. Late in the afternoon we took off for Calgary, and later in the evening we departed for London.

WED 31.8.

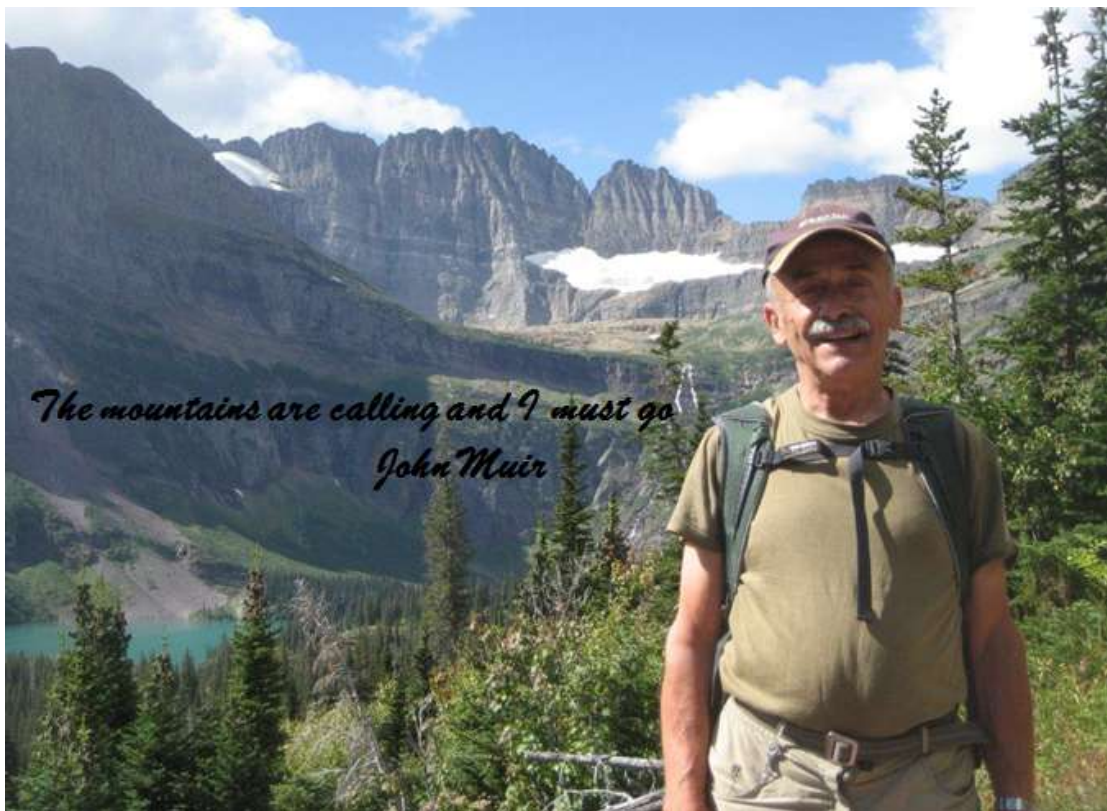
In the early afternoon we arrived to London and late afternoon we left for Prague, to be there at about 19.45 hours.



Paul's alpine plant garden in the Vancouver suburb Coquitlam. He had seen a black bear here, too.

It is usually very difficult to find a right partner for such a trip. But I think this time it worked well for both of us. We both are born in the sign of Aries (strong minded and stubborn), both are independent,

both love mountains and both can speak English. So, we had no problem to go anywhere on our own, and that suited us. Our arguments were minor and irrelevant. I would like to thank Vlastik for preparing the itinerary and for giving me an opportunity to enjoy what I love – **The Nature and Mountains.**



The song that often comes to my mind whenever enjoying the Wonders of Nature is “**Gracias a la vida**”-Thanks to life, original version by a Chilean singer Violeta Parra; made know all over the world by an American protest song singer Joan Baez.