



Bedwell for the Day

After clearing customs in Bedwell Harbor we decided to stay the following day as well. We needed to do some laundry and the kids wanted to swim in the pool. The provincial park on South Pender island in Bedwell harbor is very large and has lots of hiking trails.

We all climbed in the dinghy to take a ride up the bay and through Pender Canal. This small canal is what separates North and South Pender Islands. It is very narrow and the current runs strong at times more like a river. We explored the other side then cranked it up for the cold and windy ride back. Ava rode in the bow like a dog with its head out the window of a car. She loved every second and never complained for a minute.

Then it was off to the beach for some sea glass hunting and hiking. One of the things we love to do is collect sea glass. Its a great family activity at the beach. We had a great hike and a fun time exploring the beaches.

The kids played in the pool while the laundry finished up. Around 7pm the thunder started in. At first it was a ways off then it started getting closer. Finally it felt like it was on top of us. It was the most vivid lightning and loudest thunder any of us had ever seen! Kind of spooky while on the

water in a boat but really fun at the same time.





Views from the hike





Where to Next?

Julie and I had a lot of discussion the previous night about our next destination. Do we leave early and head out across the Strait of Juan De Fuca or take the more protected waters through the Swinomish channel? The straight is defiantly the quicker route to Canada but it comes with some risk. If crossing the straight the routine in the summer is to get an extremely early start to hopefully avoid the wind. Later in the day the sun heats the air over the land and the air rises. The cool air off the pacific starts to funnel in and replace the rising land air. In the straight this can create steep waves that are close together especially where the current opposes the wind. Optimally our jumping off point would be a little closer to the straight than Seattle as we probably had a good 3-4 hours of run time just to get to the straight.

The marine forecast called for wind 10-15kts rising to 15-25 in the afternoon with areas of fog early. Fog is stressful, but if there is fog you usually don't have wind. (We once went from Seattle to Port Townsend and never saw land or more than a few hundred feet in front of our boat for that matter. That was stressful!) After checking the forecast again in the morning we decided to cross the straight but not leave super early. We wanted to give time for the fog to burn

off but hopefully not enough time for the wind to start kicking up. As a bonus we would also be able to ride the ebbing tide out through Admiralty Inlet giving us a couple knots.

Leaving Bell Harbor at 8:10am required a radio call to the Coast Guard for our escort out. As the machine gun rounded the corner to pick us up Julie and the kids still slept in their beds. They followed us out for a good $\frac{1}{2}$ mile or so then raced off back to the destroyer. We passed 3 docked cruise ships on our way out. It's amazing how big and especially tall these ships are when you are looking at them from a small boat. Good news is there was no fog in Seattle!

After an hour or so I had an idea and grabbed the iPad. Searching for "Port Townsend live web cam" I was relieved to find it gave me the result I wanted. A live camera on top of a tower revealed no fog in the area! My fog anxiety diminished.

As we cruised through Admiralty Inlet I had the radar and chart plotter on. Suddenly a large object appeared on the radar behind us. Glancing back revealed a huge military ship bearing down on us. What an awesome and somewhat scary sight. As it passed I noticed another destroyer coming up as well. The guns are huge on that thing! I wanted to stay close but not too close. Seeing these ships reminds me how lucky we are to live in this county. Thank God for all our military men and women who risk their lives for our freedom.

As Admiralty Inlet poured into the straight the seas got a little lumpy but not at all bad. We had a fairly smooth run past Smith Island and through Cattle Pass. The only question now is where are we going to stop for the night? We decided to keep going up to Jones Island. This is one of our favorite stops in the San Juans. The whole island is a state park with lots of semi tame deer on the island. The north cove has a small dock and some mooring buoys. As we entered the cove we

could see it was very full. Unfortunately the dock was packed and another boat anchored in there would have been too tight. We made the decision to tough it out another 1hour 20min to Bedwell Harbor in Canada. Bedwell is a port of entry for Canada and is a nice place to stay. With the goal of doing most of our cruising in the Gulf Islands this trip it seemed like the right choice.

At 4:07PM we pulled up to the customs dock, almost 8 hours after we left Seattle. Entry into Canada is super easy, just dock the boat at the designated dock, walk up the ramp, pick up the phone, answer a few questions, then dump all your apples in the garbage! The kids love apples so we had quite a few to donate.

We left the customs dock and motored over to our slip for the night a few hundred yards away at Poets Cove. We enjoyed a nice dinner in their restaurant after 73.55 nautical miles traveled that day.

Trip Log – 147.39 nautical miles



Leaving Seattle



Julie and Ava relaxing in the pilothouse



Our boat is equipped with AIS (Automatic Identification System) Commercial vessels (and some pleasure craft) broadcast a signal we pickup on our chart plotter that tells us their exact location, heading, speed,



boat length, and boat name.

I found out the military vessels do not broadcast this signal. This ship did not come up on our system!



Smith Island



Another US military ship patrolling our border. This ship passed us as we crossed Boundary Pass going into Canada



This little boat better get out of the way! This ship "Hyundai" was traveling at 19.5 knots. Its 961 feet longhand has a 131 foot



This was our escort out of Bell Harbor

beam and 40 foot draft. Its
not slowing down for
anyone!



Off to Seattle

We had breakfast the next morning at the cabin then it was time to weigh anchor. At 11:15am we took off for Seattle. We had a smooth run north catching the last of the ebbing tide. We are loving our new boat! Best of all is the raised pilothouse where all 4 for us have a place to sit and look out. Its awesome!

Bell Harbor was our destination however today it was being guarded by the US Navy. With the bow of a destroyer sticking out into the entrance of Bell Harbor Marina we had to radio

for a Coast Guard boat to escort us in. These small Coast Guard boats were protecting the destroyer with a 500 yard keep out zone. If you wanted in they had to guide you, machine guns and all. It was actually really exciting to see these guys protecting our country!

At 3:43pm and 43.18 nautical miles we arrive in our slip. We had a great dinner at Ettas then grabbed a few groceries for the walk back to the boat. Bell Harbor marina is always kind of loud at night, its not one of those peaceful marinas but it sure is beautiful with the city skyline right out your window. This night was especially loud as the 90 degree day required open windows and Navy ship was docked right next to us. We were not sure if it was their generators running or what but it was loud! I wouldn't call it a good nights sleep.

Trip Log – 73.84 nautical miles





Our Escort!

