

We wandered about the town and picked a nice Greek restaurant to go to later that evening. Sidney is very charming and though the weather was gray, the town was anything but, with beautiful flowers and colorful murals everywhere. Back to the marina and hot showers then back to the restaurant and an excellent meal. A quiet evening was followed by the anticipated hot shower the next morning, but the water main to the marina broke during the night, so no joy there. Another cold and rainy day with mist and patchy fog, perfect for a sail north.



**Gray day, bright colors, Sydney, B.C.**



**Colorful flowers and fat lady, Sydney B.C.**

When sailing in this area departure depends on the tide and currents and so far we have been able to leave at reasonable times in the late morning. No good wind, but plenty of gentle rain and low temperatures.



**A long way from home, Prevost Is. B.C.**

Our destination was a lovely cove called Annette Inlet on the island of Prevost about 14 miles away. Arrgh, it was cold, Alice went below and fired up the propane heater, leaving the companion way hatch open and she was soon toasty warm. There were a number of summer homes on the many rocky islands we passed; some multi-million dollar homes, others a collection of flotsam and jetsam perched over the water displaying their nautical character.

We arrived in the afternoon to a deserted and picture perfect anchorage. It reminded us of the upper Chesapeake Bay. This impression was reinforced when a beautiful New England style powerboat with maybe lobster boat heritage came into the inlet and anchored. On its transom was the name *Bee Weems* with a home port of Annapolis MD. It seems this is the Weems & Plath "test platform" for their equipment and

one of the owners spent this last year to motor it up the NY canals to the Great lakes and then have it shipped to Anacortes from Duluth. This was their 2<sup>nd</sup> season of constant work and testing to find the best equipment available for us sailors in exotic locations. A tough job but somebody has to do it. A quiet evening with soft music and grilled salmon ended the day.



**Alice with her hot coffee on a cold day**



**It got so hot I took of my hat, for a minute**

Up very early at 0 dark thirty we headed south dodging very big BC ferries and retracing our route, finally anchoring in a bight of sand on the island of Sydney (just south and a mile or 2 offshore from Sydney town). This part of the island is a provincial park and we saw only a couple of boats and people. The island is quite unusual in that it is not rock but instead seems to be composed of sand and gravel from a glacier's lateral moraine. We spent a lot of time ashore walking on wooded paths and beach combing along the sandy shore.



**Beach combing on Sidney Bight**



**A stroll along Sidney Island beach**



It was apparent by mid afternoon that this was going to be a roly anchorage, and on impulse we motored the 12 miles across Haro Strait to Roche Harbor and U.S. Customs. Unfortunately check in is more strict, and to make matters worse we arrived after the office was closed. We called the office in Friday Harbor and were told to stay on the boat until an officer could come back to the dock to inspect us. I felt pretty bad about him having to come back then and offered to remain at the custom dock till the following morning, but no luck. He was a bit put out at first but after looking at the boat and admiring it, he mellowed out and was really nice. By now it was quite dark and we were not allowed to stay on the dock so we felt our way through lots of anchored boats and anchored among a group of small day sailors in 5 feet MLW. That's the weird thing with large tides of 8 feet or more you may think you have plenty of water until low tide, and then it is thump and bump.

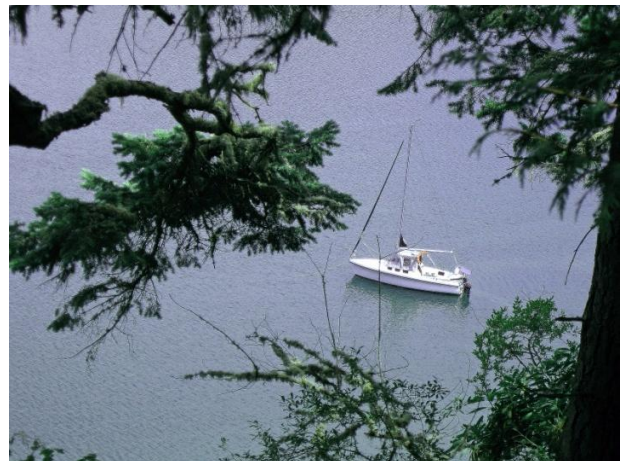


**Wake up call, Roche Harbor, San Juan Island**

growing on them the biggest sea anemones that I have ever seen. They must have been a thick as my arm and a foot long with great spreading tentacles. They reminded me of a cross between boojum trees and spider mums.

Since Alice was to fly out of Seattle in two days, we spent the next day slowly motoring and sailing around the north end of the island and then south, just checking out the coast and the many small islands along the way. Stopped at one and had lunch and then ended the day at Bowman bay again. This was just 6 miles distance from the marina and we had to leave early the next day for Alice to catch her flight.

Roche Harbor is a busy place and the activity woke us, it was the seaplanes coming and going that convinced us we couldn't lay in the bunk anymore, it was time for breakfast. We watched a few take off and then took off ourselves. For a while I had to fight the current and was down to 1 or 2 knots over ground with the motor on full. Eventually we picked up a more favorable current and felt our way through a shallow channel into an old 50's style resort on Lopez Island on Fisherman Bay, a run of 12 miles. The sun came out and the heated pool was delightful. The small marina was nicely protected and the floating docks hardly moved. The docks had



**Bowman Bay from a trail on Bowman Head**

The weather was changing with predictions of high winds the next day so we set out 2 anchors and then went ashore to walk around the trails and see the sights. Our last day was a beautiful one and the dinner and the wine a perfect combination.

Up at six AM we motored and sailed the one hour to the marina, found a slip and off loaded Alice's things and then drove through the nasty traffic on I5 past Seattle to the airport. I then turned around and drove back to Anacortes a distance of 170 miles round trip. When I arrived at the gas station just outside the marina, I stopped to fill up. It was there that I saw a large passenger van with a "Departure to SeaTac airport on the hour" parked in a spot signed with "Airport Van". Now next time.....

### Part two of A Short Visit up North



**Driftwood covered Spencer Spit, Enosis at the end**

That night the wind and rain blew about the mast, playing bad harmonics in the sail slot. It was, however, very nice to be in a protected slip with no anchor dragging worries.

Got up early the next morning to tidy up the boat and transfer some things out of the boat and into the parked pickup truck. I didn't even have to make breakfast, just walked up the road to the gas station where the Korean owner provided a hardy breakfast of homemade kimshee and a sausage biscuit.

My sister, her husband and a friend of hers arrived around noon from Portland. We crossed Rosario Strait and headed north to Thatcher pass between Decature and Blakely Island a distance of 10 miles. Blakely Island is all private and boaters can only land at a marina that is fenced in to keep the boating riffraff from getting on the island proper. Needless, we didn't stay there. We did stop for an hour or so at a state park called Spencer Spit about two miles past Thatcher pass. Spencer Spit is a long sand and gravel bar with a narrow but deep channel between it and tall rocky Frost Island. With the wind from the south we sailed through the



**Spencer Spit, Enosis heading back in from the N.**