

Wonderful British Columbia and Alberta in July 2011

by Goetz E. Pfafflin; photos by Dirk deGroen, Elliott Schnackenberg, Gretchen Carroll



After two years of planning and preparations, the participants in the British Columbia & Alberta – Canada Expedition

2011 assembled

at the elegant Fairmont Hotel Vancouver on July 9 to jointly explore Western Canada's magnificent Pacific coast line, beautiful Vancouver Island with B.C.'s capital, Victoria, the majestic Rocky Mountains, and Jasper- and Banff National Parks with their glittering glaciers and crystal-clear rivers and streams.

Participants for the Canada Expedition 2011 came from the U.S., from Germany, from the U.K., from the Netherlands, Switzerland and Canada. Six of the cars in the rally had been shipped to Vancouver from Germany, Switzerland and the U.K. Additional European teams were able to use cars made available by Lothar Schuettler, by Ed Ullom and by myself, so that in total we had 11 European teams in our midst, making the Canada Expedition a truly

international event.

It is hard to imagine a nicer way to spend two weeks, but with friends from near and far, driving fabulous BMWs through some of the most beautiful areas along some of the most drivable by-ways in British Columbia and Alberta in western Canada in July!

The Canada Expedition was planned as a 2,300 miles (3.700 km) tour of mostly secondary roads starting in Vancouver on July 9th, crossing by ferry to picturesque Victoria on

Vancouver Island, traversing the island from south to north with a side-trip to Tofino on the Pacific side of the island, then taking a 15-hour ferry trip along the Inside Passage to Prince Rupert, from there across the northern tier of British Columbia to Jasper, Alberta, where we entered the Jasper- and Banff National Parks, then south to the Banff and Lake Louise area, and, after a rest day in Lake Louise, west again to Nelson, Vernon and Whistler, all in B.C., and finally back to Vancouver on July 22



Top: The Expedition group awaiting the Vancouver to Victoria ferry at the Tsawwassen Terminal near Vancouver. Bottom left: Butchart Garden near Victoria was an early Expedition highlight. Bottom right: Four of the seven Zetties stopped to view the Columbia Icefields en route to Lake Louise.



for a festive awards banquet in the historic Fairmount Hotel Vancouver. En-route stops included an afternoon visit to fabulous Butchart Gardens outside Victoria, an optional whale watching tour in Tofino, a visit to the Ksan Historical Village and Museum celebrating one of Canada's First Nations people near Hazelton, B.C., a wonderful

centennial of the first car ever to make it to Smithers, a Studebaker from Seattle, in 1911, a quick peek at Athabasca Falls just south of Jasper, AB, then a trip into the Columbia Icefields before arriving in Lake Louise on Sunday, July 17. – After a day in the Lake Louise and Banff area, the tour

continued with a lunch stop at the historic former St. Eugene Mission school just north of Cranbrook, then on to Nelson, which involved another



Mayor Cress Farrow of the charming northern B.C. town of Smithers, accompanied by two of his Councilmen, Northrup and Wray and Museum Director Fergus Tomlin welcomed the Expedition like no one else.



The Whale Watching Experience...

by Elliott Schnackenberg



Following a wonderful first full day of driving on Vancouver Island we arrived in Tofino, where the whale watching excursion was scheduled.

About thirty Expedition participants had registered for this outing, and we were not disappointed. On boarding the "Leviathan II", picture on the right, operated by Jamie's Whaling Station in Tofino, we were oriented to the vessel and its facilities, as well as their hospitality, offering complimentary coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. Leviathan had lower level inside seating, which offered protection from the wind and elements. For the more daring, there was the open upper deck which offered better viewing since it was higher, and there were few obstructions.



When underway and heading for the open sea, the on-board naturalist presented an orientation about the creatures we were likely to see.

These included sea lions, as well as the whales.

The naturalist's presentation was very informative, and it became

quite apparent his college degree was in Environmental Science. He really knew his subject! After reaching the open sea, I didn't really know what to expect, but had



envisioned seeing a whale "perform" in a manner akin to the one featured in a rather well-known television commercial. Unfortunately, that was not to be the case! Rather, we were told to watch for swirling water, which was a sign of a Humpback whale diving

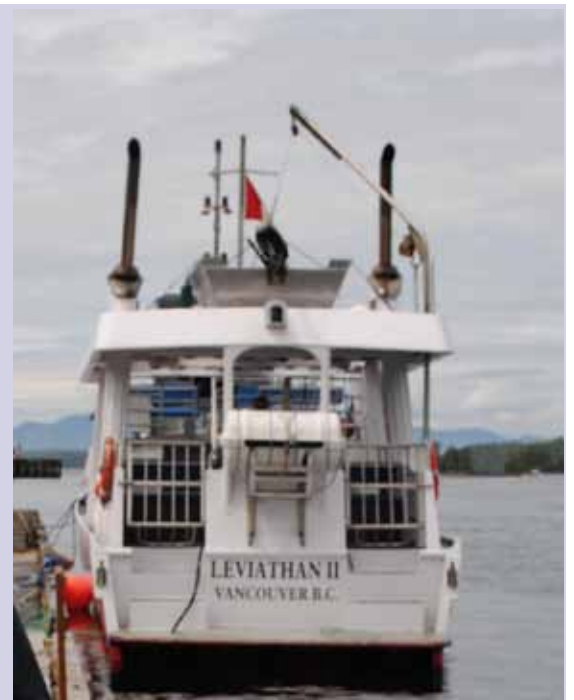
while feeding.

The Leviathan crew was very watchful, and kept us well informed of the several sightings we experienced. However, these whales were not leaping from the water, ala the television commercial, but rather they rolled with the waves which I likened to the porpoises I recall seeing in the Gulf of Mexico as a youth. I did manage to take pictures of these several events as they were presented.

As we were reaching the most distant point of the voyage, the crew received word about a group of Orca whales being sighted, and they decided to try and provide us with a view, if possible. This was a great decision, for the Orcas were migrating, and there were several in the group, including a mother with her calf.

In terms of pictures, the Orcas are more visually interesting, for they are gray with a large area of white. See bottom left. Also, in the several pictures with the mother and calf, the dorsal fin of each of them is visible. See bottom right. This makes it apparent the calf is learning "the ropes" from the mother about living in this ocean environment.

Following the return to port in Tofino, we had a wonderful seafood meal which included halibut, scallops, and shrimp. For this fellow who lives far from either coast, it was a wonderful treat to savor so much really fresh seafood, prepared by very talented people using the most effective techniques.





ferry trip across Kootenay Lake, a stop in Kaslo, B.C. to view the S. S. Moyie, supposedly the world's

Rob Vos and Matthias Lehmann organized a canoe race on Lake Louise during the rest day. Despite rain and cool temperature, the optional event, open to anyone, was very popular



oldest intact passenger sternwheeler, then on to Vernon with another ferry crossing, next to Canada's host city of the 2010 Winter Olympics, Whistler with optional bear-viewing trips during which lots of black bears were sighted, gondola rides to the top of Whistler Mountain and the

explanations to walk-up visitors about how these cars fit into the BMW family. It was a wonderful trip, - without any breakdowns, with only two flat tires (during the almost 75,000 miles / 120,000 km driven by the participants and staff during the tour), and only one (known) speeding ticket, with many old friends seeing each other for the first

famed peak-to-peak gondola to Blackcomb Mountain, and then the return into Vancouver across the picturesque Lions Gate Bridge.

The assembled parade of cars included three very interesting and rare BMW-engined, but not BMW-badged cars: a 1954 Bristol 403, driven to Vancouver by Tom and Barb Chandler from their home in Iowa (and back after the rally for a round-trip drive of over 7,000 miles!); a 1960 AC Ace Bristol, with essentially the same 2 ltr. 6-cylinder engine as in the Bristol 403 and known to BMW aficionados from the iconic BMW 328, brought to Vancouver from England by Peter and Zoe Lovett, and a gorgeous 1957 Talbot Lago 2.5 ltr. V8 powered coupe, entered by Calgarians Stephen Ross and navigator Helge Kirmse. These three cars attracted a great deal of attention, with many

time since our 2008 California Marathon or our 2010 Texas Holiday. Unfortunately we had a number of non-starters and one drop-out: Jim and Gloria Smith from Sonoma, who had looked forward to the tour with their grandson Peter Gray had to cancel due to a death in the Smith family just before the start of the event; Karl-Heinz Forgber from Munich, who had registered as Horst Emmerich's co-driver, did not get to Vancouver because of a very serious motorcycle accident in Munich on July 7, and Wolfgang and Suzanne Steinweg had to return home after just over half of the tour, as Suzanne's mom had fallen seriously ill and had been hospitalized. - We missed these good friends, - but the show went on (and Karl-Heinz is doing well in his recovery from several broken bones).



Congratulations to the seven teams, who finished the Expedition without any penalty points:

Team #39	John & Louise Watts
Team #40	Horst & Renate Breuckmann
Team #41	Rob Vos & Monique Pooters
Team #43	Horst Emmerich & E. Schnackenberg
Team #44	Scott & Fran Hughes
Team #47	Manfred & Julia Brodowski
Team #49	Mike & Peg Valentine

Canada Expedition 2011. - A good time was had by all. Photos by Elliott Schnackenberg, Dirk deGroen, Gretchen Carroll, Monique Pooters and Goetz Pfafflin



Ed Ullom, - regular participant in BMW V&CCA rallies with his trusted navigator for over 50 years, Janine, recharged his batteries with a generous supply of his favorite cigars



Gretchen Carroll, camera in hand, always with a smile, will produce the Expedition album





From Auto West BMW in Richmond to Lake Louise for canoe races and the final banquet in Vancouver, old friends where happy to meet again, and many new friendships developed.



Monique Pooters' Bear-Story

Text by Monique Pooters; photos by Monique Pooters and Margaret Valentine

We arrived in Whistler. After all those kilometers of beautiful, peaceful landscapes with hills, trees, mountains and lakes,



Whistler was very different. A lot was going on- people, shops, restaurants, many youngsters, a mountain bike championship, party-time. What a difference! We enjoyed the diversity of our trip. We partied in the evening, and then realized (too late) that we had to get up 5 o'clock in the morning to go "Bear Watching". We were a bit skeptical. Was this a tourist-trap? Orwell, we got up at 5, had a coffee and the adventure started.

Our Bear Watcher Ben drove us through Whistler in his big Jeep. Everybody was asleep it seemed- in the Jeep, in Whistler. No wonder, it was 6 o'clock in the morning. Then all of a sudden in the middle of Whistler with its shopping streets, apartment buildings, hotels a bear appeared. A little bear, but still a bear.... Wow....



Imagine you are walking in the streets of Whistler and a bear appears. Ben explained this was not a normal situation but caused by the fact that people did not handle their groceries and garbage "bear rightfully".

He stopped the Jeep and chased the people who were putting the bear and people in danger by not handling their garbage right. (not using the bins that are designed that no bear can reach the garbage). After this incident we were very much awake!

Then we went into the hills of Whistler, the skiing slopes everywhere. We looked for bears, in the woods, on the meadows, in the bushes everywhere. Ben knew where the bears could be. The first bear we saw was at some distance. Ben explained how fast these bears can run, how much they enjoy being on their own. That they do not want to harm anybody, but that if there are issues mostly the people react in a wrong way which makes the bear feel threatened. And then things go wrong. So he gave us lessons what to do and what not to do.

Then the fun really started - we saw a group of 3 bears, some lonely happy looking bears, some bears that were playing. Very special, because normally you do not see them in groups. They are "lonely riders"- normally. Now it seemed the season to bear- up....

The icing on the cake was when we went into the woods to see where bears have their dormancy. Not in caves, but in trees. They look for dead trees and then hollow the tree and sleep in it. Ok that sounds like a smart idea!!

But then imagine the trees we visited were 10 meters from the skiing slopes, so you are skiing and a bear is sleeping only 10 meters away from you.

When I asked Ben "does sometimes something happen?" He said never. We are used to living with the bears, and in fact the Bears were here before us, so we live in their territory.....

One thing was clear, it was not a tourist- trap, it was an experience "once in a life time".

Because of the bear watching but also experiencing Ben how he and the Whistler people live with the bears so nearby.

Monique & Rob

Right: A hollowed tree trunk, where bears hibernate





Everyone was very happy to see Jim Smith and his grandson Peter Gray, who joined the Expedition group for dinner in Nelson, B.C., a couple of hours drive from Jim's fishing camp across the border in Idaho

As all teams successfully completed the Expedition, everyone received a trophy.

As the rally had been well publicized along the route, many BMW enthusiasts came to visit our group and view the many exciting cars in Vancouver, Victoria, Tofino, Prince Rupert, Nelson, Prince George, Lake Louise, Vernon and Whistler.

After major rallies on the U.S. east coast in 2004 and the California Marathon in 2008, this Canada Expedition was the BMW V&CCCA's third two-week undertaking in the last seven years, with one-week rallies in Colorado, Michigan and Texas in the intervening years.

Toward the end of the Canada Expedition many participants inquired about what was next on our agenda: In 2012 the BMW V&CCCA is planning an Ohio Holiday, a one-week tour much like past events in Colorado in 2005 and in Texas in 2010. You can learn more about the BMW V&CCCA's activities under www.bmwvcca.com



Jim Westmacott, our Canadian Ambassador, functioned also as our unofficial Logistics Director. What a guy!

During the Canada Expedition a number of local enthusiasts met the group to see the wonderful cars and chat with their owners. Here below a sampling of some of those visitors' cars

Heinz Bruns, former owner/operator of a mostly-Mercedes service business in Calgary, Alberta together with his wife, brought his beautiful two-tone 3200 Super (502 Series) to Banff to meet some of the participants for a pleasant lunch at the Banff Springs Hotel.



Frederick Kozak, active BMW enthusiast in Calgary, Alberta joined the Expedition group for dinner at the Chateau Lake Louise and stayed overnight, with his beautiful M1 parked at the Chateau and admired by many.



In Prince Rupert, B.C. Phil Rolls brought his newly imported (from Japan) 1991 Z1 to the Signature-Sandman to be viewed by the Expeditioners and compared with the seven Z1s entered in the rally. (also see classifieds for more details on this car offered for sale by Phil Rolls)



Vernon, B.C. enthusiast Jerry Stoll showed off his meticulously maintained 2002 at the Prestige Hotel in Vernon, B.C.



...and BMW V&CCCA Club-member and Vernon B.C. resident Bob Johnston joined the party in Vernon with his very pretty 1974 inka 2002tii.



AHEAD OF ITS TIME IN 1989. AND NOTHING'S CHANGED.

What does this car have to do with being sensible? Actually, a lot, because it's not just any old classic. It's a young BMW classic. Admittedly, it's already clocked quite a number of miles and had a few adventures on the way, but it's still a BMW. It's as much fun to drive today as it was on its very first day. At the BMW Classic Centre, we make sure it stays that way. As you would expect, original BMW parts for young classics are available from your BMW service partner and owners also profit from the premium service provided by the BMW Classic Centre. So you see, a young BMW classic car is a very sensible choice, but it's even more about joy. Discover the gems we have to offer at www.bmw-classic.com

JOY NEVER ENDS.

The participating Expedition cars arranged by starting number, - with one exception! Photos by Elliott Schnackenberg, Dirk deGroen, Lou Ann Shirk and Goetz Pfafflin



