



WATERWAYS

Natural History Coastal Adventures

SPRING 2014

40 Years to Celebrate!

In 2014, Bluewater Adventures celebrates 40 years in business! When you reach a milestone in life or business, it is important to celebrate. So, over the next few months you will see a variety of stories in our monthly Enews, Blog and Facebook page describing special moments, the people who played important roles, and more than anything, efforts to express our gratitude for the support we have – here and around the world.

I am really excited about our 2014 season. We have some incredible resource guides and naturalists lined up to inspire and educate you. Our partnerships with groups like Raincoast Conservation Foundation, University Alumni and distinguished nature travel companies from around the world are going to create some fabulous trips. We are truly looking forward to having you aboard!

Owner – Randy Burke



Randy Burke on the deck of Island Roamer, circa 1990.

Looking Back on 40 Years

Forty years ago, coastal First Nations were still emerging from the legacy of residential schools, the devastation of introduced diseases, and the theft of their land by colonists. The pivotal role the Haida played in “saving South Moresby” in the Queen Charlotte Islands (Haida Gwaii) in the 1980s was a turning point that put the Haida in charge of co-managing their island jewel – the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site. Since then the tide has continued to turn with coastal First Nations winning key Supreme Court cases and gaining more control over any industrial development in their traditional territories.

Forty years ago, humpback whales were seldom seen on the waters of the Inside Passage; one had to go offshore to find them. After years of whaling ended in 1966, the population was slow to recover. But recover it has. From a low of only 1400 in the North Pacific when whaling stopped, it is estimated there are now over 18,000. Bluewater trips have always seen large numbers of humpbacks in Southeast Alaska, and later off Haida



Rachel Elliott

Researchers estimate the humpback whale population is recovering at an annual rate of 5-6%.

Gwaii, but now they are common off Northern Vancouver Island and sightings are now being recorded in the Salish Sea near Victoria, Vancouver and Seattle.

Forty years ago, few people went searching for bears to “view” – most people felt these beasts were to be avoided. Whale watching was just starting as a phenomenon with orcas being captured for aquariums and



Sherry Kirkvold

Due to their light colouring, Spirit bears are thought to be better at catching fish in daylight.

the first boats starting to carry tourists to see the “leviathans of the deep”. Now bear viewing is following the same growth curve and people around the world have discovered the beauty and majesty of bears. In 2006, the Spirit bear was made the official animal of British Columbia.

Forty years ago, wild salmon and herring stocks were healthier on the BC coast supporting a large fishing fleet, and there were few salmon farms; timber companies clear-cut vast sections of the forests and no one yet conceived that keeping forests standing provided a “carbon sink” that was good for the planet and the concept of global warming was unknown.

Over the last forty years, new archaeological discoveries are proving that the first humans in North America likely lived on the coast where they traveled by water and food was abundant. Sites in Haida Gwaii and Southeast Alaska have now been dated back over 10,000 years. Humans may have been here longer, but the evidence would be under the ocean, as water levels rose more than 300 feet with the melting of the last Ice Age.

Forty years ago,

Bluewater Adventures started with day trips aboard a trimaran, shifted to overnight trips aboard a 51’ ketch

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Lindsay Janes

In June, the grizzlies of the Kutzeymateen feed on protein-rich sedges.

Quotes from you...

"Your enthusiasm has sparked new interests for me. The beauty of the area, the history of the Haida and the changing scenery were fabulous."

*M. H., Hamilton ON
June 1998*

"A new and different adventures each day. We loved the dolphins, bears and whales. The food was outstanding. The Crew was superb. Spectacular trip!"

*C.D., Denver CO
September 1998*

"I worried about sea sickness and showers but found beauty, bears, whales and wonderful people. It has been a stupendous experience."

*A. & J. E., Chicago IL
September 1999*

"We truly don't want to leave. Thanks to Capt'n 'n Crew for an absolutely wonderful adventure in a most beautiful spot!"

*D. & B. G., Medocino CA
June 2002*

"I feel nourished on so many levels! I am grateful for my exuberant, quietly meditative, richly textured, colourful introduction to the Queen Charlotte Islands and to our Crew for your caring expertise."

*M. F., Cambridge MA
August 2002*

Looking Back continued from page 1

named "Solskin" and then expanded to "Island Roamer" in 1983, the "Snow Goose" in 1996, and added "Island Odyssey" in 2003. Accommodations have improved from no beds, to an open plan with some guests sleeping on tables, to

today's comfortable private cabins. The quality of our trips, food, staff and the company as a whole have continued to improve as we learn more each year.

Northwest coast totem poles are intended to return to earth, like the people they were commemorating. As the memories of past trips slowly fade, they are replaced by the "wows" and silent wonder of today's passengers. To stay alive a culture needs new creativity; new totem poles to rise. Similarly, successive generations of Bluewater staff learn from those who came before them and bring their own love, knowledge and



Sherry Kirkvold

enthusiasm to the journey. Those of us lucky enough to have experienced these journeys look back with joy at our moments. We are so fortunate to be able to share in the experience of such treasured places.

Transient orcas are now called Bigg's after whale researcher, Dr. Michael Bigg.



"Solskin" a 51' ketch, operated trips in Desolation Sound and the Gulf Islands in the early days.

Over the last 40 years:

- Over 12,000 guests have joined us for amazing trips;
- 112,000 nautical miles have passed under the keel of Island Roamer (more than five times around the world)
- We have served nearly 200,000 cups of coffee (that coffee is now organic, Fair Trade and roasted in Nelson, BC).
- We have spotted over 16,000 whales. Given that the British Columbia and Southeast Alaska humpback population is estimated at 3000-5000 animals perhaps we have seen them all. With over 1000 orcas identified here as well, it is likely we have now encountered each pod (and certainly helped science by cataloguing individual whales with ID photographs).



Snow Goose

Guests enjoy amazing sightings of whales. Humpback whales are now our most common whale and are spotted on every summer trip.

Special Trips for 2015

Bluewater Adventures has some very special trips planned for this summer. Two in particular deserve attention:

■ **August 28 to September 4**, Bluewater Adventures is joining with the Raincoast Conservation Foundation for an unparalleled voyage into the research and conservation of the Great Bear Rainforest. Raincoast scientist, Dr. Caroline Fox joins us along with renowned Captain Brian Falconer. It is hard to imagine two people more knowledgeable about the salmon, bears, and wolves in the largest remaining tract of temperate rainforest on the planet. Partial proceeds of the journey go to support the ongoing work of the foundation (www.raincoastconservation.org).

■ Four years ago, Bluewater was thrilled to introduce the North Coast / Khutzeymateen trips starting from Prince Rupert, BC. This year, in late

August, we are expanding these trips. In mid-August, salmon return to this part of the coast to spawn up their natal rivers and creeks. It is an extraordinary time to visit Canada's only grizzly bear sanctuary – the Khutzeymateen. It is also an incredible time to witness feeding humpback whales. Our **August 22-28** expedition will bring guests from around the world to experience these pinnacle wildlife events.

20 years ago sea otter sightings were rare. Now they are expanding their range along the coast from Vancouver Island to SE Alaska.



Snow Goose



Special Resource Guides

For many people Haida art and culture is a unique draw for our Haida Gwaii trips. We are pleased to have a series of resource guides this summer who do not just educate but immerse you in the experience.

■ **Captain Gold** is a Haida Elder and was the original Watchman at the old Haida village and UNESCO World Heritage Site of SGang Gwaay. He has worked on Haida archeological sites and represented the Haida on the Gwaii Haanas Management Board. We are thrilled to have him join us again **June 22-30** and **July 15-22**.

■ **Golie Hans** joins us again **August 13-20**. Golie is a Haida Elder, a Matriarch, and a cedar weaver. She has been a Haida Watchmen in the old villages of Gwaii Haanas for 25 years, welcoming visitors and sharing Haida heritage. She is an integral part of a language revival project called the *Skidegate Haida Immersion Program* (SHIP). A group of dedicated Elders, all fluent in Haida, have been working to save the Haida language by cataloging Haida words and names for future generations.



Golie Hans

■ **Nathalie Macfarlane**, an island resident for over 25 years, has just stepped down as director of the Haida Gwaii Museum. On the **June 14-22** trip she provides guests with an intimate knowledge of Haida history and life.

■ **Dr. Robin Wright** joins us for her annual voyage – **July 22-29**. A professor at the University of Washington and curator of Native American Art at the Burke Museum she brings a wealth of knowledge on Haida



R Burke

The memorial poles and longhouse remnants at SGang Gwaay was once a thriving community of 300 people.

art, history and culture. (In 2015, she is leading a voyage down the seldom visited, west coast of Haida Gwaii – stay tuned).

Wildlife is the major focus of our trips and having the opportunity to travel with a noted educator or researcher is very special.

■ **Dr. Barrie Gilbert** is a retired professor at Utah State University and one of the principal bear researchers in British Columbia and Alaska. Few people have committed their lives for bears like Barrie has. Join him on our North Coast/ Khutzeymateen trip – **June 17-23**.

■ **Brian Keating** returns this year to lead our Southeast Alaska voyage **July 6-16**. The former Director of Conservation at the Calgary Zoo, he has a contagious fascination and love for wildlife and the importance of habitat preservation.



Dan Liden

We see 2 kinds of glaciers in SE Alaska, hanging and tidewater.

The Story of a Yacht – Island Odyssey



Lindsay Jones

One year after Island Roamer was launched by Cooper Yachts near Vancouver, BC, they launched a sister ship named “Summertime”. In 1984, this 70 foot motor-sailor had been commissioned by a hotelier from Victoria, BC with dreams of sailing around the world. Plans changed and within a year and the yacht was sold to a fellow in California, who ran occasional charters out to the Catalina Islands.

Ten years later, “Summertime” was sold to a Venezuelan bank president and the Caribbean was now home with a professional, live-aboard crew who maintained her. In 2002, Alzheimer’s

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On the Horizon for 2015

Planning Ahead? The Bluewater 2015 trip schedule is now available on our [website](#). We have some very special trips planned. Bluewater will be offering expeditions with various universities and educational institutions, noted conservation groups, and some well-known nature travel companies. Contact us for details.

Need More Info?

If you want to check availability or find out more details about a particular trip, please contact the Bluewater office. Telephone toll-free 1-888-877-1770. Erin, Leanne and Randy are happy to answer your questions. Or contact us via email at explore@bluewateradventures.ca





Quotes from you...

"What a trip!! A fantastic learning experience in a truly wonderful part of the world. Thanks to the Crew – it blew my mind!!"

P.C., Melbourne Australia
July 2004

"The Roamer – beautiful! The Crew – fantastic! The food – superb! The new friendships – a joy! And the WHALES – phenomenal!!! I have learned to simply absorb contentment... Merci!!!"

S. M., Montreal QC
July 1984

"Whoever created the world went to a lot of trouble. It would be downright rude not to go out and see as much of it as possible."

Edward Readicker-Henderson

Join us – We're Social



BLUEWATER ADVENTURES

The Story of a Yacht *continued from page 3*

had struck the father and the family felt the need to sell her. The husband of Bluewater naturalist, Kitty Lloyd, saw her for sale in a yachting magazine. She called Bluewater Captain, Chris Tulloch who brought the ad into the office, placing it in front of Randy Burke, the owner. He knew Randy had been looking for an opportunity to expand the business and nothing could be an easier fit than the identical sister-ship.

With great anticipation tickets to Fort Lauderdale were purchased; but maintenance had become lackluster. To upgrade basic systems to Bluewater standards was going to take a lot of work, and Transport Canada would require major safety upgrades for fire prevention and watertight integrity. This million dollar project was a big risk for the small company, but the bank was prepared to offer a mortgage and the purchase was completed. "Summertime" was loaded onto a freighter for passage to Ensenada, Mexico. Bluewater Captain,

Ian Giles then sailed her up the Pacific Coast to British Columbia – back to where she was built. Within 7 months all the aft cabins were reconfigured, all electrical wiring and rigging replaced and new zodiacs were purchased. When the first charter group came aboard in May, the fibreglass had hardly set on the new water tanks. It was an incredible example of "can do" and Chris Tulloch, Ian Giles and Neil Shearer were the key to success.

The same Victoria hotelier had continued to name all his subsequent boats "Summertime" and the name was not available in British Columbia; so, to recognize the sister-ship connection with "Island Roamer", she became "Island Odyssey".

It has been 11 years, and the "Odyssey" has proven herself a tremendous triumph. She has enabled Bluewater to expand the number of Haida Gwaii and Great Bear Rainforest trips, and allowed the introduction of new programs like the North Coast/ Khutzeymateen.

Conservation Update

Bluewater Adventures is committed to maintaining a carbon neutral status. After working with Climate Smart to accurately measure our emissions we have chosen to purchase our 2013 carbon offsets from Offsetters, and support projects in areas we operate. In Nanaimo, BC offset funds are used to capture escaping methane (which has a global warming impact over 20 times that of carbon dioxide) at the landfill and convert it into less harmful carbon dioxide and power generation. Offset funds have also created a ground-breaking project in the Great Bear Rainforest, which generates emission reductions by protecting forest areas that were previously designated or approved for commercial logging; and investing in the creation of sustainable jobs in remote Coastal First Nations communities.

Bluewater Adventures takes "Sustainable Tourism Award" at the Canadian Tourism Awards.



Update: Enbridge Northern Gateway Project

In December, the federal Joint Review Panel announced its approval for the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline to connect Alberta's tar sands with the coast at Kitimat, BC. Since the announcement, 10 law suits have been filed based on unresolved issues including: the lack of consultation with First Nations; knowledge of how to clean up a spill of the heavier tar sands bitumen; and, the fact the review panel did not consider the federal recovery strategy for threatened humpback whales (the tanker route traverses newly designated critical whale habitat). Groups have criticized the federal government for delaying completion of the whale recovery strategy for over 7 years. Now the pipeline proposal needs to be approved by the federal cabinet, but the project is likely to be tied up in the courts for the next few years.



Daenna Van Mulligan

75% of the coastal wolf's diet consists of salmon, seals and beached whales.

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Save Trees, Receive the Newsletter by Email

As part of our commitment to the environment, we are now using email as much as possible. If you would prefer to receive "Waterways" by email please let us know. Guests with email also receive extra updates. Bluewater will never sell, share or abuse the private information of our guests.

