



Autumn Cruise

Snake and Columbia Rivers on the MV Island Spirit

by Ann MacKay

October 25, 2010 — Clarkston, WA

Our nine day trip with the State Bank Heritage Club starts with a drive to the Ace Hardware parking lot to meet the bus for the trip to the Atlanta airport. Half way to Perry, I realize I left my brand new hooded rain jacket purchased just for this trip hanging in the front closet. I want to blame Dan for rushing me out the door at 1:50 a.m. Oh well, I do have my purple jacket which is water resistant. We have an uneventful flight with only minutes to spare between planes in Denver.



Captain Jeff Behrens met us at baggage claim in the Spokane airport. Gary, the motor coach driver, loads the luggage for the 2-hour trip to the boat. Jeff calls himself the “boat driver.” He is the owner operator of the MV Island Spirit based in the Seattle area. Gary will be with us the entire trip. We find out he will follow us along on the highway as we cruise. The bus will be waiting for us for the shore excursions which are all included in the cruise price.

The ride takes us through fertile farm land growing winter wheat. There are undulating hills some plowed, some with wheat growing. We find out that most of this grain will be barged down the Snake to the Columbia river and loaded onto cargo ships at the port in Portland.



Jeff passes out bagel pieces with cream cheese and small sandwiches to tide us over until lunch on the boat. Carol Horton, the State Bank Heritage Club Director, reports that a big storm came through Atlanta at 8 a.m. causing flight delays. I get a message from my neighbor about a tornado watch. We are relieved that we got out of Atlanta.



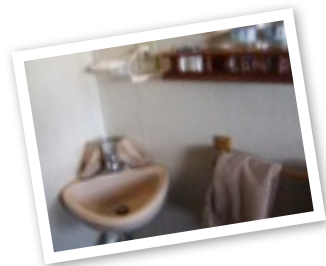
Shirley and Kay, from Laramie, WY, took a trip with Captain Jeff in April around the San Juan Islands. They liked it so much, they booked this trip. The boat was used for weddings, corporate events, and fishing trips until 2002 when Jeff decided to add cabins to do cruises. There is room for 33 passengers although we will be only 24 for this trip.



As we pass through Colfax we hear the story about the Colfax football team who lost to a big rival, St. John's, in 1938. Fifty years later the teams (with the same players) played again in the Codger Bowl. The Codger Pole of five cedar logs with a statute on top commemorates the Colfax win. It was completed by a chainsaw artist who carved 51 faces of the players in the cedar logs. He lived in the town for three months while he did the work. Besides the Ole and Lena jokes Gary tells, we do get tidbits of information about the areas we pass through.



We arrive in Clarkston, WA on the Snake River where the boat is docked. The drop in elevation from the plateau from Lewiston, Idaho to Snake River is quite dramatic.



We boarded about 12:30 p.m., checked out the room and went to the dining room for lunch. We discover we have Lindsey, the chef and Jake, the pastry chef on board. They are both culinary school graduates. We eat fresh homemade bread for the rest of the trip. Today, we have focaccia and cold cuts sandwich with



rice and barley soup. Cookies are served in the lounge which will be the standard for the rest of the trip. We are all raving about the excellent lunch.

Brenda and Emily are the servers who also do the bartending and room clean-up. Steve and Adam, deckhands, complete the 8 person crew.



The itinerary says we will have a jet boat trip in Hell's Canyon. My vision of a rubber raft bouncing over rapids was soon replaced by a comfortable enclosed boat driven by Butch. The River Quest jet boat trip took us 44 miles south on the Snake River toward the Hell's Gate Dam. I wasn't expecting the desert like conditions, but this area only gets 9 inches of rain a year. Butch pulls the boat to the shore so we can see the petroglyphs completed centuries ago.

We stopped at Garden Creek Ranch now owned by the Nature Conservancy It is leased by Butch, the jet boat owner. It is used as a fishing camp for steelhead which are ocean going trout. As the sun was getting lower in the sky, it came through the heavy cloud cover to bath the bare hills with gold. We got our first taste of the the weather we will have for a good part of the trip, cool, overcast with occasional showers.



We got back by 6 in time for the open bar and appetizers which is standard for the rest of the trip.

The lounge is like a living room with three triple sofas, two love seats, a matching club chair, a round table for four and another rectangle table with chairs. There is room for everyone to sit and chat or mingle. The bar area includes coffee, tea, ice tea, lemonade and

water available all day. There is a book case with a variety of fiction and non-fiction books. There are lots of books about Alaska which is where the ship goes in the summer.

Our first dinner included green salad, Cornish game hen, fingerling potatoes, asparagus and triple berry cobbler. We are off to a good start. The meals will be consistently excellent for the entire trip.

Cabin 109 is right at the bottom of the stairs so it is very handy. One bed is higher than the other, but suitcases fit under both beds. I have to leap up to get in bed. The generator stops at 10 p.m. so it gets quiet for sleeping. The boat is not traveling at night and runs on batteries from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Tuesday, October 26—Palouse Region

Breakfast is offered for early risers at 5:30 a.m. It is fruit, yogurt, cold cereal and a baked item. I had my two cups of coffee in time for the hot breakfast served at 8-ish of fried eggs, bacon, hash browns, toast and juice. With open seating for the meals we will be able to get know the other passengers. The menu and day's schedule is posted daily. The meal times are 8-ish, Noonish, and 6-ish.

Richard, the expedition leader, gives an interpretative talk on the ice age using a cardboard representation of the Columbia River Gorge followed by a DVD of the *Great Ice*

Age Big Floods. As the DVD cover says:

“When geologists first saw the vast Columbia Basin in eastern Washington State, they recognized that glaciers and flowing water had played a large part in shaping the extraordinary landscape, with





its canyons (coulees), buttes, dry cataracts, boulder fields, and gravel bars. It was taken for granted that what they saw was the cumulative effect of familiar processes, operating on a familiar scale.

However, a closer examination of the features in the Basin led one geologist, J Harlen Bretz, to propose that it could only have been a sudden cataclysmic flood, on a scale never before considered possible, that could account for the phenomenal size and distinctive characteristics of the landforms. This radical idea was not well received by fellow geologists, and a long-running scientific dispute followed.

Ultimately his extensive field work, plus additional research by others, conclusively established that many extraordinarily huge and powerful Ice Age floods had shaped the region. Two National Natural Landmarks, Wallula Gap and the Drumheller Channels, are the direct result of the floods.”



We went through our first lock, Number 49 at Lower Granite Pass at 221 feet of elevation. We see lots of arid landscape on both sides of the Snake River. It's cold up on the top deck so hat and gloves are in order.

It's lunch at noon with barley mushroom soup, seared tuna salad, dill cottage cheese bread and brownies served at the bar. After lunch, we watch a documentary about the Palouse region, Pullman, WA, and Moscow, ID. It views like a Chamber of Commerce advertisement.



I demonstrate the iPad to Nancy this am and again after the film. I love doing “show and tell” with my iPad. There is some trouble with the sewer system for about an hour so we are directed to use a forward bathroom. All is well an hour later.

It’s back to the cabin for a warm jacket to watch another lock opening and closing at Little Goose. We are now headed to our evening mooring, the Palouse River. We can see oldest train viaduct for the Union Pacific system ahead of us. Built in 1914, this Railroad Bridge is 3,290 feet long, built of steel and set on concrete piers. It was once billed as the highest and longest trestle in the world. It is located at Lyons Ferry near the confluence of the Snake River and Palouse River.



There is a small RV park by the mooring. Anchors are put out for the night. The deckhands swing a boat off the top deck to take people shore for a walk around the park. We opt to stay for happy hour. Dinner is excellent with spinach salad, wild Alaskan sockeye salmon, zucchini risotto, broccoli and carrot cake for dessert.

We watch an early Bill Cosby DVD, *Bill Cosby, Himself* from 1983. The lounge cleared out by 9 p.m. We are anchored miles from the nearest town. Jeff hopes there won’t be too many trains to disturb our sleep. We had a little drama in the bathroom when the toilet water came rising up in the bowl after flushing. Adam fixed the suction system so we could rest easy. Adam works the night shift. He stays up during the night to be available if a passenger needs help and other duties that are necessary on the boat. I could hear the water lapping against the side of the boat as I lay in bed. It is so quiet once the generators turn off.

Wednesday, October 27—Richland, WA

My morning routine becomes, shower, coffee and then breakfast. Today, we eat buttermilk blueberry pancakes, sausage and juice. Richard showed a very well produced video, *Secret Mission: Hanford*. It is the fascinating story of Hanford's secret role in the World War II Manhattan Project. The desert in eastern Washington becomes the site for nuclear fission to produce plutonium for the atomic bomb made at Los Alamos. How come I didn't learn that in school? Maybe because they continued to make plutonium for 40 more years and it was supposed to be a secret.

It is sunny today with clear blue skies. I spend time on the upper deck watching the scenery. Lunch was fish chowder with chunks of potatoes and shrimp and fish. There was dill cottage cheese bread and quinoa salad finished off with chocolate chip cookies.

I hung out on the upper deck chatting with Shirley and Kay from Laramie, WY. It is a great day for cruising down the river.



We reach the confluence of the Columbia and Snake Rivers with the Sacajawea State Park on the right side of the fork. We travel north on the Columbia River to reach Richland, WA for the night. We moor at the city dock with a nice waterfront park and walk a block and a half to the Columbia River Exhibition of History, Engineering, Science and Technology (CRESHEST).

The docent talked a little too long while we were standing and repeated what we heard on the morning DVD. Richland was the company town for the DuPont workers at the Hanford Engine Works during World War II. We learn work continues in the area for the cleanup. For more than forty years, reactors located at Hanford produced plutonium for America's



defense program. The process of making plutonium is extremely “inefficient” in that a massive amount of liquid and solid waste is generated while only a small amount of plutonium is produced. Additionally, all of the facilities and structures that were associated with Hanford’s defense mission must also be deactivated, decommissioned, decontaminated, and demolished. That environmental cleanup project is the work that approximately 11,000 Hanford employees are involved with today.



The museum has floor plans of the “Alphabet” houses. Richland's unique "alphabet houses" were designed by Spokane, Washington, architect G. Albin Pherson to accommodate the tremendous growth in population at the Hanford site during World War II. He was given less than 90 days to completely design the entire new Richland community, including streets, utilities, and commercial and residential building plans. Each housing design was assigned an alphabet letter designation and included single-family homes, duplexes, apartments, and dormitories. As Richland was a “company town” until 1958, these homes maintained a distinct uniformity for many years. One neighborhood of 162 alphabet houses that have largely maintained their original appearance, designated the “Gold Coast Historic District,” was named to the National Register of Historic Places in April 2005.

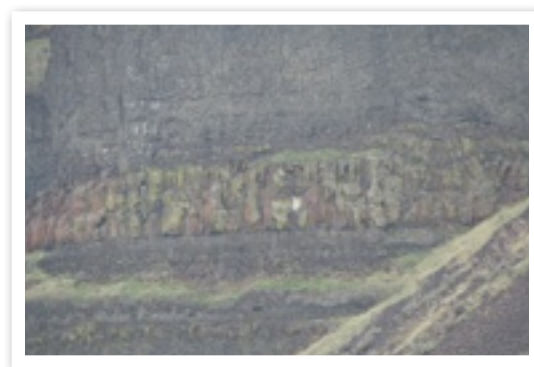
After the museum visit, I walk up to the busy main street and find free wi-fi to in front of an office so I stand there and download email and check headlines. We are back in time for happy hour with bacon wrapped dates for the appetizer.

Tonight the dinner menu is green salad, chicken sambuca (bacon on top), cheese ravioli, green beans, and creme brulee served in individual ramekins perfectly torched.

Richard showed the movie, *Second Hand Lions* with Michael Caine and Robert Duvall. The lounge clears out immediately after the movie ends. This is the pattern for the rest of the trip.



Thursday, October 28 —Arlington, OR
It’s overcast and raining on and off this morning. Breakfast is frittata, Canadian bacon, toast, hash browns and cranberry juice. There is usually a crowd drinking coffee and eating fresh fruit and muffins



before the hot breakfast.

This morning we get right to it by watching the Ken Burn's production of *Lewis & Clark: The Journey Of The Corps Of Discovery, Part I*. It is an excellent production. It is inspiring to be cruising on the same rivers as the explorers but with more ease and comfort.

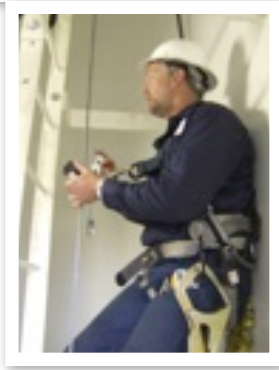


Richard stops the DVD so we can go out to see the Wallula Gap, where the ice dammed up during the ice age. I am out on the bow to watch. The columnar basalt formations surround us. There is a highway on one side and train tracks on the other.

Part I of the movie ends with Lewis and Clark seeing the Rockies in the distance. I'm writing yesterday's notes sitting on the couch waiting for lunch. Lunch is spaghetti bolognese, bread sticks, salad, and gingersnap cookies.



We stop at Umatilla where we board the motor coach for the trip to a wind farm and the Condon pioneer museum. We take a detour off the highway to Boardman (25 miles) to see the Captain Al James tugboat in the waterfront park. It is an overcast day with sprinkles of rain. As we head to Gilliam County and our stop in Arlington (26 miles) most of the bus is sleeping.



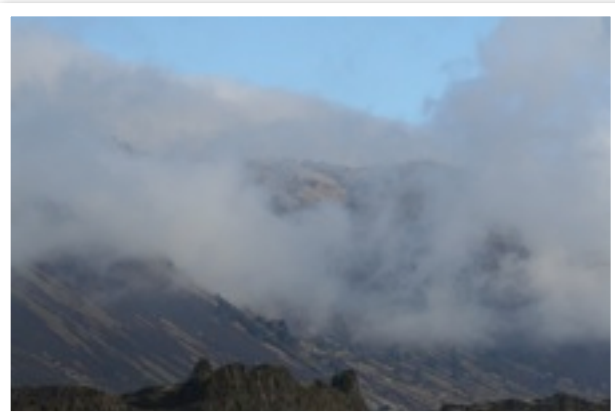
We pick up Louis and Alene Rucker, both age 80, wheat farmers in Gilliam county north of Condon. They become our tour guides telling us of the history of the area, wheat farming and the fire danger, and about the wind farms. We head north out of Arlington. We go by the China Ditch (dug by the railroad engineers to assure a water-free base for the rail bed). We see the Oregon Trail Marker where it passed east to west through Gilliam County. We pass Shutler Flat which is a large flat area 5 miles south of where an old wagon with the Peter Shuttler maker's mark on the side broke down and disintegrated over time yet leaving the name on the side. We go through Condon (36 miles) and continue another 6 miles out in the countryside.



Wind farming is becoming big business in north-central Oregon. Picking up the diffuse winds of the Columbia River, the 200-foot-tall turbines rise above the wheat fields. Located climatically at a point where desert heat collides with cooler intermountain breezes, these turbines supply clean energy to Bonneville Power and utility companies in Portland and Eugene, OR. We see the giant windmills

on many hills as we ride along.

We end up at AES Wind Generation to see a wind farm and the inside of a 200-ft tower. There is a long row of turbines on the hill. The turbine blades are over 150 feet long and come in on three



flatbed railroad cars. AES is a private utility operating in 23 countries. We put on hard hats and go inside the tower to see the electrical panel and transmission lines. The top of the tower turns depending upon the direction of the wind. The technician showed how he climbs the stairs in the tower using a fall arresting harness. The fog comes in and obscured the view.



Our last stop was the Condon Depot Museum Complex with several old buildings that were moved to this site.

Alene is one of the docents. Inside a large building, we see a sheep shack used by a sheep farmer (early RV), a cook shack, a real covered wagon, and a 1938 fire truck still used in the Condon 4th of July parade. We toured a barber shop (1890s), a pioneer cabin (1884) nicely outfitted by the granddaughters of the family that lived there, the school house (1915), and the old city hall and jail. The main building was the old depot with nice displays of vintage clothes, hats, furniture and artifacts. It's raining now as we go from building to building. We were happy to get back on the bus and head back to Arlington where the boat is waiting.

We eat a buffet chuck wagon dinner of hot dogs and hamburgers served in the lounge. If the weather had been better, it would have been an outdoor activity.

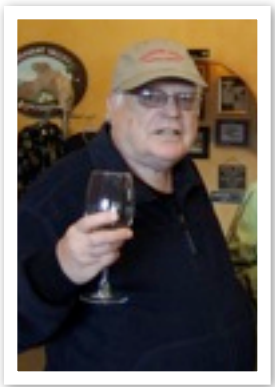
I found out that the Condon Chamber of Commerce solicited Jeff to come and tour the area. Since Condon is 36 miles from the river, it is not a town you would stop at when river cruising. We are all little wiped out after our road trip.

Friday, October 29 —Hood River, OR

After breakfast of toad in a hole (egg cooked in a hole in the middle of grilled bread), we watch the second



half of the Lewis & Clark DVD. It is very well done with journal entries from the the corp members. We are cruising all morning with some sunshine. Lunch is minestrone soup, shepherds pie and black and white cookies (sugar cookies with dipped dark chocolate on one side.



Today we travel through the John Day and Dalles locks. I visit the bridge with others and learn about Captain Jeff's new love interest. When the door is open, passengers are allowed to hang out with the captain. It is a great view down the river. In the afternoon, I am out on the back deck in a fleece vest and sweater reading and enjoying the scenery. We are starting to get into the Columbia Scenic Gorge Area. I don't see any windsurfers, however.

We dock at a small marina in Hood River, OR with Gary and the bus waiting for us. We are off to the Pheasant Valley Winery about 20 minutes from town. The fall foliage is at it's peak. We see Mount Adams off in the distance with no clouds in the way.



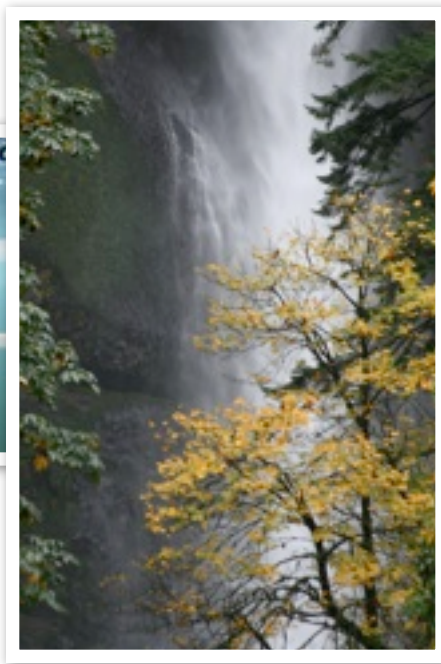
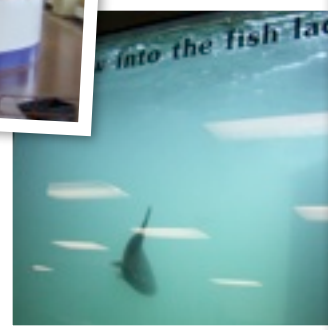
There are six wines to taste, and taste was the operative word, says Dan. There is a long bar with the guests bellied up. There are some comfy chairs for the non-winos. We see lots of orchards and wineries on the drive back.



Some folks wanted to go shopping so we got off at the boat and the bus returned to town to drop off shoppers and to get 10 pounds of flour for Jake, the pastry chef.



Tonight we had salmon on bread and smoked salmon on crackers for our appetizers. Dinner is served with shaved Brussels sprouts in a lemon vinaigrette, cod



provençal, polenta, green beans, and brownie pudding topped with ice cream.

Kerry and Victor provided the entertainment with a guitar and mandolin. It was very enjoyable. We had lights out by 10 p.m. after water rising in the bowl but Adam quickly came to the rescue.

Saturday, October 30—Columbia River Gorge

We are warned that it would be a busy day so breakfast of french toast and sausage is served about 15 minutes early. We are on the bus by 9 a.m. Our first stop, 30 minutes away, is Multnomah Falls. It is the second highest falls in North America. It is fed by underground springs from Larch Mountain. Even with cloudy skies, it is a beautiful sight. After the hour stop we are back on the bus for a stop at the Bonneville Lock and Dam.

This time we tour the complex rather than going through the lock on the boat. After a 30-minute overview, by Brian, the park ranger, we go to the power plant. I was surprised how clean and colorful it was. The generators are painted red, white and blue. The art deco detail is still intact in the generator room. The original navigation lock at Bonneville was opened in 1938 and was, at that time, the largest single-lift lock in the world. It was built as a New Deal project providing jobs to thousands during the depression.

We return inside to see the viewing windows for the fish ladder along side the dam so the fish can migrate. We do see some big ones.

It starts to rain during this tour. Now we have another 30-minute ride to the Columbia River Interpretative Center for a box lunch and tour. Richard and Brenda haul in two big coolers, sandwiches in one and sodas in the other. We feast on tuna salad wraps, pasta salad, a hunk of

cheese, apples, cookies, a selection of Frito Lay snacks and sodas. Fantasy Cruises does take care of us.



After lunch we met around the fish wheel and learn how they were used in the late 1800s to catch salmon. We also see a model of the fish platforms the Native Americans used to catch salmon. We also had a demonstration of the old steam engine used in saw mills.

We have time to tour the other exhibits including a surprising collection of 4,000 rosaries. The collection represents the life's work of the late Donald A. Brown of North Bonneville, WA , a founder of the Skamania County Historical Society. The museum took 16 years of fundraising to build the center in 1994. I discover free wi-fi in the last 15 minutes.



A few wanted to go shopping at the Pendleton company store which is on the way to the boat so we were back on the bus by 2:30 p.m. The boat has moved down river to pick us up.

It continues to rain. The walk back to the boat was the longest yet, down ramps and a long concrete stretch. The crew managed the wheel chairs down the steep ramps in the rain.

It is nice to have peace and quiet back at the boat while others are shopping. Most get a cup of hot tea and settle into the couches. Once everyone is back on board, we cruise for a few more hours to reach St. Helens, OR for the night.



Pot stickers, carrots and broccoli are the appetizers. Dinner is shredded carrot salad, beef stew over couscous, asparagus and devil's food cake. We adjourn to the lounge for the movie, *Out At Sea* with Jack Lemon and Walter Mathau.

Sunday, October 31—St. Helen, OR

We have muffins and fresh fruit before the hot breakfast of scrambled eggs, sausage gravy and biscuits. We watch the sun go into the cloud cover.



The crew are in costume this Halloween morning. Jeff is a Gloucester fisherman, Emily is impersonating Richard, wearing a gray short wig, Brenda looks good as a cowgirl (wearing her own clothes she says), but the winner is Adam who looks like Captain Jack Sparrow complete with dreadlocks and sword.

The sun comes out for our morning in St. Helens. The town had a costume party last night hoping to make the Guinness Record for most costumed people in town. They did make it with 541 people.

It's an easy walk up the gangway to the town. Right at the end of the gangway stands a life-size statue of "Seaman", Captain Lewis's Newfoundland dog. Robert Tidwell of St. Helens, Oregon, used a chainsaw to carve the dog. We stop at Grace's Rivertown Antiques, one of the nicer shops I have visited. We walk around in the old town and discover Halloween decorations in front of stores, on parking meters, and in the town square. I carry my iPad in my back pack so it is easy to check for wi-fi. I stop in front of a cafe and later in the Columbia River City



View Park. We had instructions to be back on board by 11:30 a.m. for our cruise to Astoria. I make it with four minutes to spare. I was using wi-fi in the city park downloading *Sugar, Sugar* from iTunes.

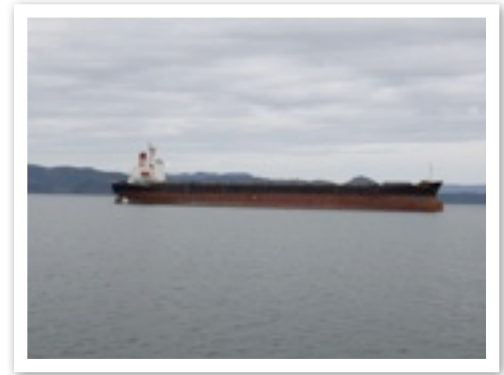
We eat chicken chili, mac and cheese, and cream cheese chocolate cupcakes for lunch. Richard showed the DVD *Celilo Falls and the Remaking of the Columbia River* which as the DVD cover states:

“provides a glimpse of the life at Celilo as it once was and considers the cultural, social, and political forces that brought about its end, signaling a new era in the

relationship between people and nature. The history of the development of the Columbia for industry and commerce is conveyed through archival film footage.”

I think I dozed through most of it. At least I had my eyes closed most of the time.

We travel to Astoria passing large ocean going cargo ships. We watch another DVD that plays at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. This one is very good. What surprises me is how powerful the waves are at the river entrance to the ocean. The Columbia River Bar, where the Pacific Ocean and Columbia River meet, can be a navigational nightmare. Since 1792, approximately 2,000 ships have sunk in this area, earning the nickname, “Graveyard of the Pacific.”



There are big homes along the water on both sides. We pass the big Georgia Pacific paper pulp plant making toilet paper and paper towels. We moor in the West Basin Marina enclosed by large steel plates. Overhead is the Astoria-Megler Bridge that spans the mouth of the Columbia River between Astoria, Oregon and Point Ellice near Megler, Washington. It is the longest continuous truss bridge in North America. Astoria was named after John Jacob Astor. His American Fur Company founded the town in 1810.

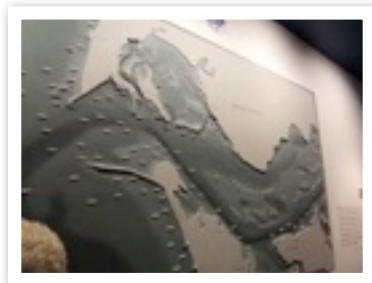


Tonight we have crap dip and pita chips for snacks with our drinks. We are served a beet salad, pork loin, carrots, black beans and rice, and pumpkin pie with whiskey sauced whipped cream.

A Big Fat Greek Wedding was shown after dinner. It is an enjoyable movie even seen again. As usual the rooms clear out right after the movie.

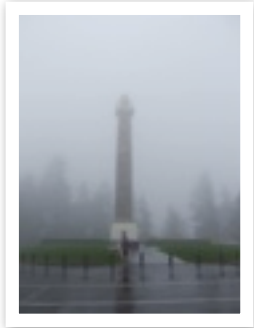
Monday, November 1 – Astoria, OR

I wake to banging and dragging sounds outside. It is windy and sheeting rain this morning. Steve, the deck hand, is encased in his rain jacket and rain pants battling the elements as he works to tie down kayaks and equipment blown around by the storm.



Blueberry muffins and fruit are out early. The hot breakfast of cheese and ham omelet, hashed brown potatoes, sausage, and toast sure tastes good on this blustery day. Since it is raining so much there is a change in plans. We go

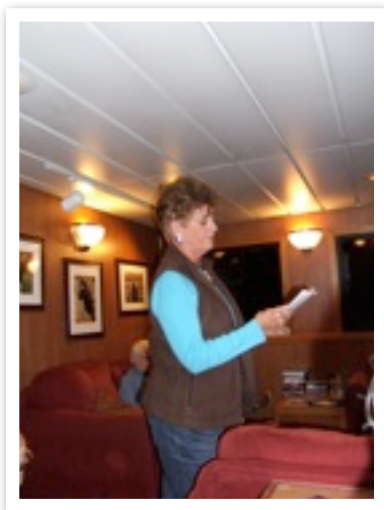
to the Columbia River Maritime Museum this morning. It is very well done with an actual Coast Guard rescue boat at the angle of a 30 degree pitch and roll inside the exhibit hall. [Here is a great Youtube video explaining the Coast Guard exhibit.](#)



The bus takes us on a trip around the historic part of the town. Some of the movies filmed in Astoria are: *Kindergarten Cop*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III*, *The Goonies*, *Short Circuit*, *Come See the Paradise*, and *Free Willy I and II*. There are many nice Victorian homes along the way. We end up on a winding road to the top of a 600 foot hill to see or try to see the Astoria Column. It commemorates the westward sweep of discovery and migration.

Built in 1926, it is 125 feet high and has 164 steps winding to the top. The column has Italian bas relief designs around the column. No one opted to do any climbing.

We are back for lunch of tomato bisque, grilled turkey and cheese sandwiches, broccoli and cauliflower cold salad and peanut butter cookies. It is a perfect comfort meal coming in out of the cold and rain.



I decided to stay behind rather than go out in the rain again to see the Lewis & Clark Interpretative Center at Cape Disappointment. It is an hour ride out and back. It is located high on the cliffs 200 feet above the pounding Pacific surf. Lewis and Clark landed there in November 18, 1805. It overlooks the bar. I read and pack the suitcases. The group returns at 3:50 p.m. Dan says it was interesting but it was too foggy to see the waves at the bar.

We had chicken wings for appetizers. The Captain's dinner included surf and turf (roast beef and three perfectly cooked shrimp), skin on mashed potatoes and asparagus with baked Alaska for dessert made with a chocolate chip cookie.

We adjourn to the lounge for staff tributes by Captain Jeff and the passengers. Steve shows a slideshow of photos he produced using his MacBook using photos taken by Don and Brenda. The Georgia girls sang *Sugar, Sugar* by the Archies dedicated to Jeff. I hold the iPad up to the microphone so we could hear the music (which I downloaded earlier) We also sing a version of *You Are My Sunshine*, substituting crew for you. It is well received. This is the last trip of the season for the crew. It's been a great trip with great people besides the scenery and the great transportation.

Tuesday, November 2—Travel

We are up at 6 for the last morning. Jake out does himself and makes cinnamon rolls for the early breakfast food. We eat eggs, bacon and hash browns for breakfast.

We leave the ship by 8 a.m. for the drive to the Portland airport. Crew members, Lindsay, Richard, Adam, and Brenda are on the bus with us as they end seven months of work and head home. Jeff and Steve will wait for good weather to travel across the bar to Ballard, Washington for the winter. He cruises from Sitka to St. Petersburg, Alaska in the summer, <http://www.smallalaskaship.com/>

We fly to Atlanta with a stopover in Phoenix arriving after 10 p.m. By the time we get our bags and got loaded on the bus it's 11:30 p.m. The only hiccup on the trip home was the kneeling bus in Macon that wouldn't get off its knees! When the bus is "kneeling" the brakes are on so the bus won't move. An hour later, the driver gets it repaired so we arrive in Perry after 2 am and are home by 2:30 am.

