

## Seagate and Wild Blue Alaska Cruise – Thursday-Saturday, July 17-19, 2008

Today is Thursday and as planned, the boats will split up: Wild Blue heads north to Sandspit Marina, while Seagate continues to cruise in the south Moresby Island area. If all goes as planned, Wild Blue will meet Lady Anne, another boat joining the cruise, in Sandspit and then both will rendezvous with Seagate on the weekend at Thurston Harbour.

The weather has deteriorated and strong winds and seas are our forecast for Hecate Strait in the afternoon hours. Half of Wild Blue's 5-hour voyage will be in the Strait so we leave Moresby at 6AM to get the outgoing tide and best weather. Our easterly course out Cumshewa Inlet is smooth until we turn north around Cumshewa Head towards Skidegate Inlet. The outgoing tidal current causes the sea to build and makes for an uncomfortable ride. After 2 hours of bumps, the crew is grumpy and Wild Blue is ready for flat water. We finally find it just as we approach Sandspit Marina.



*(Wild Blue and Lady Anne in Sandspit Marina, Queen Charlotte Islands.)*

The Marina doesn't have a Harbormaster on duty but there is plenty of dock space and we take a choice spot near the entrance. Most of the boats are 15-30 foot sport fishers, either private or for charter. There's not much activity and later the locals tell us the fishing has not been good so far this year.

Jerry, Justin and Jan help clean and wash down the boat. The Watkins will be leaving tomorrow via Air Canada from Sandspit Airport back to their home in Simi Valley, California. Three hours after we arrive, the Lady Anne, a Navigator 48, with Hugh McIntyre and crew tie up just behind us, ending a 90-mile run from Prince Rupert. Lady Anne had a rough ride through big seas and high winds, but surprisingly, there weren't an unusually large number of items scattered about the cabin. Even so, after these kinds of crossings a certain amount of tidying up is typical.



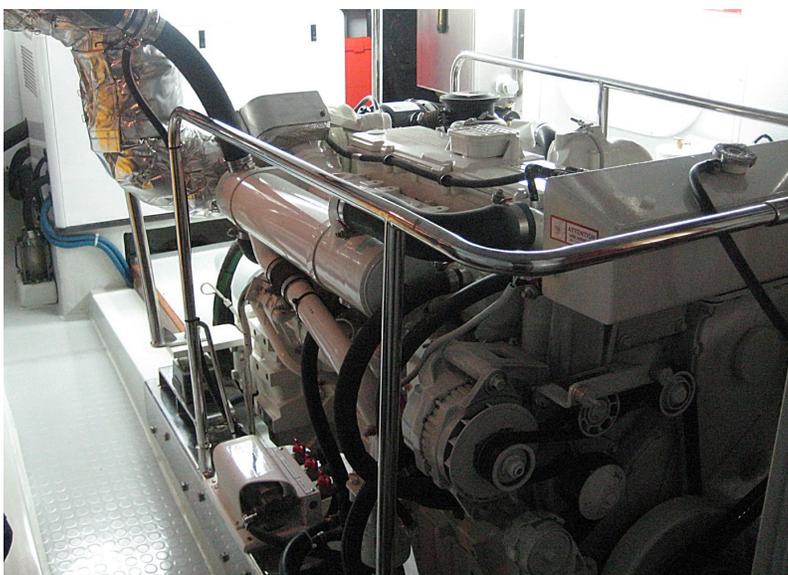
The Benson's joined the Watkins for a farewell dinner at Sandspit Inn, one of the two local restaurants. The meal was surprisingly wonderful with fresh salmon, halibut, outstanding bumble-berry pie and reasonable prices. But the real highlight was the poutine, a Canadian specialty of French fries covered with gravy and cheese. We've had these at Gibson's Landing and Smiles restaurant of Prince Rupert and they are good, but the Sandspit Inn has the best poutine.

*(← Six gallons of used oil from the engines.)*



*(← Wild Blue has a single main engine and no get-home engine, so we are extra careful to keep it maintained and change the oil and filters often.)*

After seeing the Watkins off to the airport, Friday became a Wild Blue workday. The tender was launched and fueled; the windlass safety line snap hooks were replaced; the main engine and generator oil and filters were changed; the sink-shower sumps were cleaned; the boat was provisioned; the water tanks were filled, the clothes and bedding were washed; and a whole bumble-berry pie fetched from the Sandspit Inn and placed in the freezer.



*(← Main engine with diesel generator in soundproof box in background. The generator dishes out 12,000 watts.)*

On Friday, The Bensons were summonsed for cocktails on the Lady Anne and to chat about the upcoming week. Lady Anne has two more crew arriving Saturday afternoon. Wild Blue



is going without visiting crew for this week, which will allow the Benson's to wind down a bit.

(← *Lady Anne* crew L to R: Hugh McIntyre, Herb Machleder, Nadine and Cameron McIntyre.)

The *Lady Anne* is joining the cruise from the Queen Charlotte Islands and down British Columbia's inside passage to Anacortes, Washington. The boat is a Navigator 48 with twin diesels and normally cruises at 15 knots. Owner Hugh McIntyre is a long-time boater and member of the California Yacht Club. He is Chief of Neurology at UCLA Harbor General. He's brought *Lady*

*Anne* up from her homeport in Portland, Oregon to Ketchikan, Alaska before meeting us here. His crew of Herb Machleder is a retired surgeon and professor emeritus at UCLA and has vast boating experience. Cameron McIntyre, Hugh's son, and wife Nadine have boated for many years. Cam, who grew up in the California Yacht Club Junior Program, has a Captains license and is with Ocean Equipment, a boating products distribution firm. Nadine is a "drug dealer" for Genetec Corporation, representing the good kind of drugs.

Saturday with most of the boat work completed, we focused on following the local marine weather. It rained in the morning and the forecast was for a temporary respite before the next storm, estimated for Sunday afternoon-evening. Seagate should be waiting for us in Thurston Harbour by now. After another "Wiser's" cocktail party on *Lady Anne*, the crews agreed to leave early Sunday morning for the rendezvous with Seagate. Most retire early to prepare for the next morning's cruise.