



CANADIAN WAYFARER ASSOCIATION

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LOG GROUP: Western Canada

LOG TITLE: The Way of Wa-Goosh (Victoria to Brigade Bay)

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DATE: 1976

Wa-Goosh (W 1857) was mostly on her trailer during 1976 but one outing is worth recording. My son, Roger 11, wished me to take him and his friend, Geoffrey, on an overnight. My friend, Frank, sails a CL 16 (there are no Wayfarers for sale in B.C.) and he and his two sons, Carl and Michael, were keen to join us in sailing to Brigade Bay, Gambier Island, Howe Sound (Lat 49° 29.3'N, Long 123° 20.0'W) on a Saturday to return the next day. The distance from our launching place (Jericho Sailing Centre, Vancouver, Lat 49° 16.6'N, Long 123° 12.0'W) is 14.4 miles and our courses would be across Burrard Inlet and up Queen Charlotte Channel. At Brigade Bay, I knew there was an abandoned house where we might shelter if it was raining, (anyone who was in Vancouver this past summer will understand that remark!).

With overnight gear, rain clothes, and food for five meals, we set out in cold damp weather about 1030 one Saturday in July. An easterly allowed us to reach over to Point Atkinson Light but having rounded this prominent landmark, we had to beat up the Channel. The CL 16 showed us her stern while ferries were avoided even though we were privileged vessel! Off Finisterre Island, the wind dropped so Frank started his new outboard and towed Wa-Goosh most of the remaining distance to our destination. Rain was falling by this time and my crew huddled under the deck next to the forward bulkhead. Later, the rain eased and a breeze sailed us into Brigade Bay about 1700. The tide was out but rising. We had a choice of a gravel beach at the north end or a rocky one at the south and where the abandoned house was located.

Landing on the sandy beach, we ran to the tree edge to discover hidden in the trees, a crude cabin that boasted a door, a barrel stove and crooked chimney, a makeshift table, and a platform for a bed. Obviously, we had a find. This shelter was used periodically by persons associated with log salvaging and they were not at home! We were cold, damp, and craving for dinner so after moving the emptied boats up the beach on inflated rollers, we looked after our stomachs. Soup, heated stew and fresh fruit were very welcome. Rain fell heavily from about 1900 until after midnight. Our six sleeping bags were located between the wet spots on the cabin floor (Frank didn't fare too well in this regard). We were poor fire makers so dispensed with any campfire entertainment — rain can be a real dampener in a leaky cabin with a broken heater!

Rather than setting anchors and swimming to shore, we lifted the boats onto beached logs above the estimated high water mark. The boys slept while Frank and I bailed our boats and waited until high tide was reached at 2315. Half an hour later, having proven the seas was receding, we crawled into our sacks. So much for Saturday.



Sunday brought beautiful weather. The sun was shining and glistening wet surfaces were drying. We hiked along logging trails to the old house where lilies, rhododendron, holly, and fruit trees still remained. This old home had one dry room but no heater or weatherproof windows. We had been fortunate in our choice of shelters.

Leaving the cabin tidier than we found it, we departed Brigade Bay about 1000 and tacked southward for the wind had changed with the weather. At White Cliff Point, having survived ferries to Vancouver Island, Bowen Island, and Langdale from Horseshoe Bay, we found the wind changing to a good weather northwesterly. Wa-Goosh had outsailed the CL 16 to this Point and continued to widen the gap during the beam reach to Point Atkinson. After waiting for Frank, Carl and Michael, both boats broad reached across Burrard Inlet to Jericho arriving at about 1630 on schedule. During the afternoon, shirts were stripped off and all hands had a turn at the helm.

Mabel, Frank's wife, bless her, was waiting with two iced beers! Fellow dinghy sailors helped place our boats on their trailers and we were home for dinner. Apart from the rain, the weekend was a success and memorable. I only wish such trips occurred more often and could include all of my family.

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