

Vancouver and Embarkation onto Le Soleal towards the Alaska Inland Passage

12-14 July 2019

Friday we visited huge Stanley Park, which is on a peninsula jutting to the north of downtown Vancouver. We wandered about the eastern part of the park, mostly along the coast line, and visited memorials to Japanese-Canadian soldiers who fought in WWI and wars thereafter, and an interesting collection of totem poles, while enjoying the view of the harbor and downtown. In the evening we attended Erev Shabbat services at a conservative synagogue not far from our lodgings. Nice service, held outdoors, but little interaction with the congregants (two similarities to the synagogue in Portland). We appreciated even more our congregation Torat Hayim which would never allow a stranger to escape without friendly greetings.



Figure 1. Lumberjack monument, Stanley Park



Figure 2. Sulfur harbor - view from Stanley Park



Figure 3. Water fights! They had a nearby 'child drier' - at Stanley Park.



Figure 4. Totem poles at Stanley Park.



Figure 5. Cruise terminal - viewed from Stanley Park

Saturday we embarked on our cruise to the Alaska Inland Passage on *Le Soleal*. This is a small cruise ship, carrying something like 280 passengers and 160 crew. The passengers were largely from U.S. college alumni groups (we were associated with Edith's Tufts alumni association). Most of the groups were accompanied by a professor from the university, who contributed a lecture during the voyage, in addition to talks by the "expedition team" – naturalists who were part of the ship's crew. The experience so far has been fantastic. All of the crew is friendly and helpful, and our fellow passengers are wonderful conversation mates. The bridge is almost always open for visits. We had long chats with one of the pilots who was conning the ship during its passage through Vancouver Sound. He explained navigation and "sea traffic control" in the region. The ship, captain, officers, and menu are French. The food is very good – high quality and reasonable portions.



Figure 6. Le Soleal