

Disembarkment and Juneau AK

20-21 July 2019

Le Soleal docked at Juneau around 0600. We packed our last minute stuff, and headed for the buffet for our last meal on board, and to say goodbye to the many friends we made on board. We sat on the rear fantail, and were visited by a bald eagle, sitting on a dock-mounted lamppost:



Figure 1. Bald Eagle looking over our ship.

We got a bus ride from the travel company to the Alaska State Museum, adjacent to our hotel. The weather wasn't great – cold, cloudy, and raining lightly. So we dropped our bags at the hotel, and headed back to the museum. It wasn't huge, but well arranged, with good exhibits presenting Alaska's history, starting with the various Native American peoples. One interesting feature of the Tlingit people that inhabited the southern coastal region is that each matrilineal clan was associated with either the Raven or Eagle moiety. They could only marry with the people from the opposite moiety, i.e. Ravens always married Eagles, never other Ravens. Likewise, various tasks were always carried out by members of the 'other' moiety, such as building a house, or burying a relative. This established a complicated set of obligations, which were periodically discharge by holding a 'potlatch' - a feast thrown by a clan leader that established his prestige among his peers.

We walked around town before and after a late lunch, in somewhat better weather. Juneau, Alaska's capital has a population of around 30,000 – just a little more than Neve Amal. There is no road connection with the outside world. You can only get here by sea or air. Here are some photos:



Figure 2. Alaska governor's mansion.



Figure 3. View from the bridge to Douglas Island.



Figure 4. Breaching whale sculpture.

Sunday morning's weather was better, so we headed for the *Perseverance Trail*, which begins in town, and heads up into the mountains. The trail was once Alaska's first road. We visited the Last Chance

Mine Museum, which was about an hour up the trail. The docent explained the history of this gold mine, and its interaction with the town.

Leaving the mine, my path was crossed by a critter that appeared to be a gray squirrel on steroids: long cylindrical body, and long gray bushy tail, and about the size of a small dog. Don't know what he was. But later, we came across a porcupine, sitting in the branch of a tree.



Figure 5. Porcupine sitting in a tree.

The trail after the mine presented terrific views of surrounding mountains and a roaring Gold Creek below.



Figure 6. The trail, described as Alaska's first road.



Figure 7. Gold Creek.



Figure 8. First house in town, at the beginning of the trail.



Figure 9. Close-up of an interesting flower in front of the house.

In the evening, we caught the hotel shuttle to Juneau's small airport, for our flight to Anchorage. The flight was unfortunately delayed by about 2 hours, but in the end got us to Anchorage safely, and with the long hours of daylight, still with some light.