

SPARROWHILL 2022





Welcome to our Year!



View from the Deck, New Year's Day



January 30. There are usually Great Blue Heron fishing along the shoreline of West Sound, but only once has one taken the trouble to come up the road and pay us a visit.



February 14: spring is a-comin



February 24: Ellie's friend Jamaica ("Mica") came to visit for a few days. Much fun had by all.



March 3: view west towards Sidney
BC, from West Overlook, south trail,
Turtleback Mountain



April 9: Nathan arrives!!! At the ferry landing in Anacortes, with an ice cream as big as ... well, it's big. Photo especially dedicated to his parents.



April 11: Michael Budnick shows Nathan how to work the Kubota excavator – says “it’s just like a video game”. Nathan spends 15 minutes *in control*.
Awesome!

Michael and machine here to set up pad for rain water tanks, something that happens a couple months later.



April 12: splitting and stacking wood.
Ellie helps as usual.

Sadly, Nathan has finally figured out that splitting wood is not so much fun after all. It was good while it lasted.



Boy and dog.



April 16: back to LA and school.



April 17: Bill consoles himself with a row around West Sound.



Bob Schoen's totem pole – his father-in-law's, really. An interesting story of mourning and affirmation of life. It makes a nice 20 minute row from the marina.



April 22, another row. Victim Island, showing the little shell beach that's only accessible on a minus tide.



May 1: the Cox's Orange Pippin is really jumping into this "spring" thing with both feet. We had a good crop of Pippins this year, still good eating at the end of December.



May 1: The “Orchard” – Pippin, Pink Pearl, and Gravenstein (just a few blooms) next to the wood shed, with the Ananas Reinette at the left. Grass is also jumping into spring with both feet. It rains every other day so it never gets dry enough to mow.



May 21: first short cruise of the season, anchored overnight in Blind Bay, a few miles from our dock. We've been there many times, and always enjoy Shaw Island. This quirky display has been at a driveway near the ferry landing since the first time we visited, in 06 or 07. The sign changes several times each year. This message is a favorite. The masks on the manikins are new.



May 21: sunset in the cockpit. This view is a big source of Blind Bay's appeal.



June 2: visitors – American Goldfinches



June 6: visitors at the dock – Purple Sea Stars. When we first came, they were abundant, then nearly disappeared for a few years due to a highly contagious disease. They are starting to make a come-back.



June 8: Lene steering us on a broad reach, sailing north in Upright Channel. At the end of the second short cruise of the summer, to Friday Harbor (San Juan) and Fisherman Bay (Lopez).



June 10: lots of little spiders, on one of the deck box plants.



June 15: big minus tide in West Sound.
Bill's skiff ("Ariel") at the end of the
dock on the right.



June 18: Hurray! Nathan is back! For five weeks, a very big treat for his grandparents.



June 21: Nathan, Ellie, and Grampa go for a row in Ariel.



June 21: Ah, much better, now he's rowing!



June 22: Daysail to Blind Bay. Anchored and rowed ashore to buy junk food (like good sailors everywhere) at the Shaw General Store. Note mask, around his neck – he used it in the store, careful kid.



June 24: spray-painting the
Warhammer models.



June 27: Health food, for a change.
Fish'n'chips at Buck Bay.



June 28: row/paddle trip to Victim Island, timed so that the pocket beach was accessible – a very low tide. Jeff Hanson, our neighbor to the east, kayaked, and Nathan and Grampa rowed Ariel. Photo: N. Gralewski.



June 28: view from a cliff on Victim Island, southeast past Blind Bay to Lopez Island in the distance. Photo: N. Gralewski.



June 29: not sleeping on the foredeck.
Afternoon sail in West Sound aboard Sara E.



June 29: Nathan and Grampa, tilted. A fine afternoon on West Sound. Photo: N. Gralewski.



July 1: View of our house from Turtleback Mountain, south trail, on a hike with...



July 1: Nathan, Grampa, our friends Mark and Britta and wonderful Adrian from Portland and his Aunt Shana from Houston. Very fortunate to enjoy their company for a week, for the second year in a row.



July 4: a hike to Cascade Falls, becoming something of a tradition for the Portland crew. After all, these are the *highest* falls on Orcas – 40 feet! It's a very nice, if short, walk in Moran State Park.



July 4: Adrian with Aunt Shana on the beach at Cascade Lake.



July 11: Nathan inspecting Grampa at Turn Point Lighthouse, the first stop on our voyage to Stuart Island and Friday Harbor. For more about this trip, see the graphic log on wwsorcas.com.



July 17: Hurray! Amelia is here. She arrived on July 8, to stay for *two whole weeks*. We are so lucky!!!



July 18: Amelia is one of Ellie's Special People – Amelia and Lene brought her back from Michigan as a puppy, a four-day car trip, lots of bonding.



July 18: Ariel's rig set up, for the first time this summer.



August 7: Marty and Barb visited for the first week of August, staying in the VR operated by the Sea-Doc Society, right at the foot of Crow Valley Road, overlooking West Sound – beautiful spot. Lots to do – good food (outdoor restaurants!), good hikes and things to see, and a lovely afternoon on West Sound in Sara E – mostly, really good company.

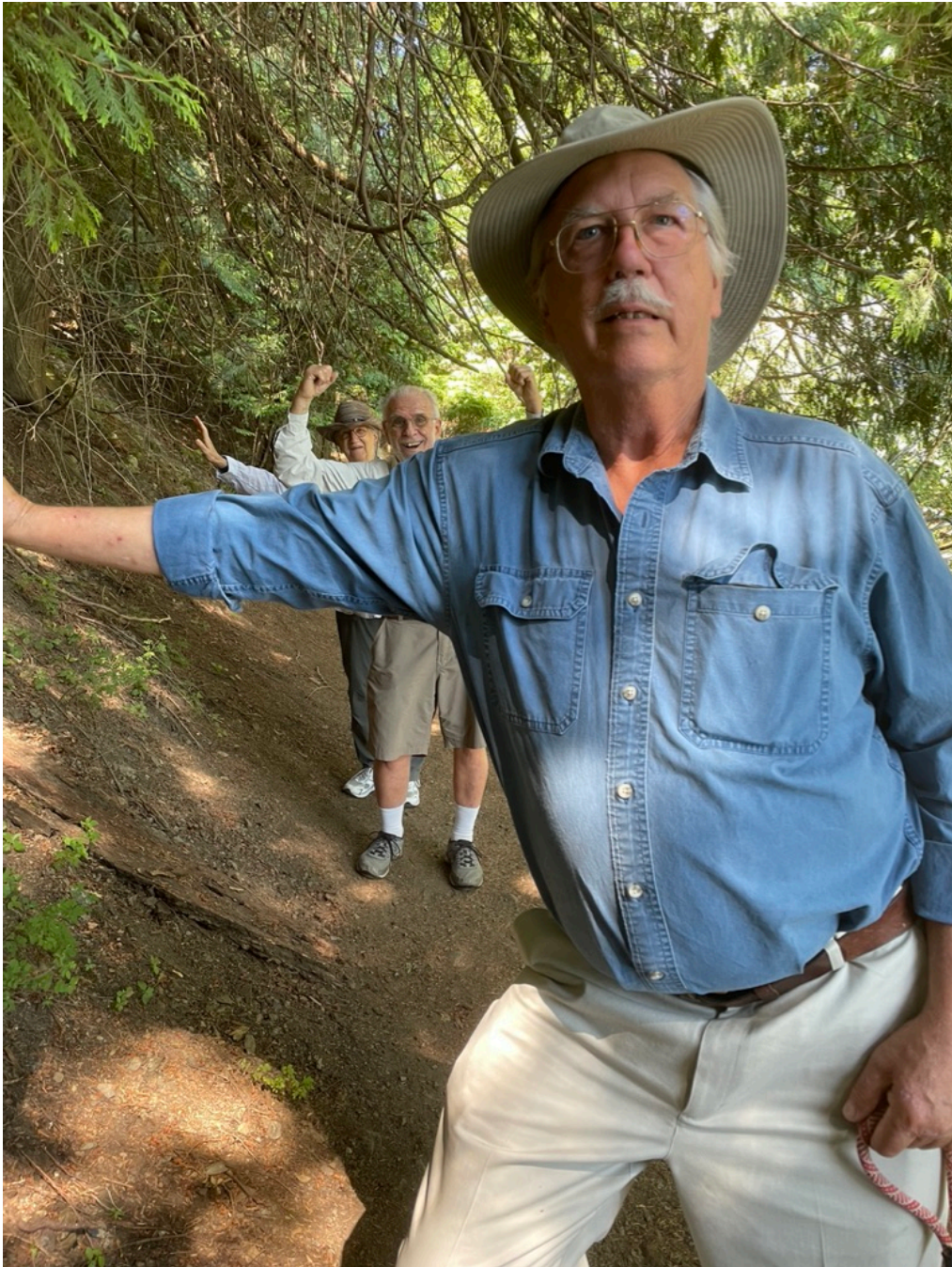
Photo: L. Symes



August 23: Wonderful to have Molly and Joel visit for a few days. Here Lene and Molly enjoy the patio, an innovation of 2021.



August 23: Molly, Lene, and Ellie converse in the garden.



August 25: Hike with Molly and Joel at Judd Cove Preserve. Would be a good photo of Molly and Joel, If I weren't taking up most of it. Sorry.



September 14: Hike up the north trail on Turtleback Preserve, to the Waldron overlook. Still very hazy from wildfire smoke. You can see Waldron Island, and just make out Saturna Island a couple of miles across Boundary Pass. The other Gulf Islands are beyond but invisible.



September 16, bound for Sucia Island. Lene in her favorite sheltered spot, on the companionway step. After a two-nighter to Griffin Bay and Friday Harbor on San Juan Island in late August, this was our final voyage of the season. However, what a trip – sail, almost all the way!



September 16: Close-reaching in light air north of Orcas, with Sucia ahead.



September 16: Four-legged crew. She understands the accommodations – another cave – but it must puzzle her, why we are lurching about out here.



September 17: Echo Bay, Sucia. A fleet of kayakers on the left, Sara E on a mooring, closest boat on the right. In July or August this bay is packed with boats, and you have to arrive at the right time and move smartly to snag a mooring (Sucia is a state Marine Park, with state-maintained mooring buoys). September is the right time to come!

On the way back to Orcas the wind picked up to 15-20 kts out of the north. It was a wild ride!



September 25: Walking down Morning Ridge trail, south end, Turtleback Preserve. Photo: L. Symes



October 2: Jeff Hanson silhouetted against the rising sun, West Sound on the way to Cayou Channel. Which used to be called Harney Channel, until (as in so many other places in this country) someone realized that the namesake was not quite the thing. “Cayou” is Henry Cayou, a very important local citizen in the first half of the 20th century and a Native American.

So Jeff and I decided to go to the re-naming ceremony, in the recommended manner (by boat). It was a great morning. Rowed 3 miles to the ferry landing, then beat back against a nice northerly breeze. Jeff was way faster of course.



October 4: What a mess. Trenching with Michael Budnick for the bunk house, aka “Summer House”, water, electric, and sewer supply. Lots of work. Much excitement when we cut a pressured-up sewer pipe. In the end all was well.



October 9: near the end of our first circuit of Cascade Lake. We'd gone round Mountain Lake, the other large lake in Moran Park, many times over the years, but never got around to Cascade. It's a nice walk, we recommend it.



October 14: Move that rock...



October 18: dig that dirt...



October 18: Finished! Path connects extended entrance plaza (stonemason Paco Miller, in September) with the patio that Paco built last year. The path used up most of the remaining usable pieces of bluestone. Enough left over for a couple of small projects next year....



October 26: Lene's new sticks. Early tests indicate that they will be a roaring success.



November 5: Lene's birthday. A lovely walk
in Judd Cove Preserve.



November 11: big storm a couple of days ago, brought down a large fir on the north trail, Turtleback preserve. Ellie and I joined Jeff and Mica for a walk up to the junction with Raven Ridge trail.



November 11: meadow at the start of Raven Ridge, the elevation is about 1000 ft, and it's a bit colder up here – dusting of snow from a few days ago still on the ground.



November 18: a week later, same crew climbed Lost Oaks trail, which has several fantastic panorama views of the Gulf Islands and the Vancouver Island mountains beyond.



December 3: preparation for a superb Danish pork meatball soup. Traditionally made with little flour dumplings, but Lene decided to use chopped vegetables instead, which was a great choice.



December 5: Ellie at the big oak tree at the top of Morning Ridge trail. Our house is somewhere back there.



December 5: Jeff and Mica at the lesser Ship Peak. Looking towards Friday Harbor and the Olympics in the far distance.



December 5: looking north-west towards Saltspring Island in the sun, with Pender on the right, Moresby on the left. You can just make out Mount Maxwell in the center.



December 11: the new weather station. Will need to re-site it to get more accurate wind readings – in this position on the deck, the turbulence from the house confuses the poor thing. Good to have local temp, pressure, amount of rain, humidity, wind, and history by day, week, or month.



December 12: Ellie is ready for a walk up the north trail at Turtleback.



December 20: The year ends as it began, cold and snowy. 2022 has many good memories for us, and we hope you have enjoyed sharing some of them. We look forward to a many more in 2023, and wish you a very, very good New Year as well!!!