

President's Message July

I'm writing this while sitting in a motel room in Ignace, Ontario. For those of who who haven't been here, Ignace is about two and a half hours north and west of Thunder Bay. My husband, John, and I have been travelling for the last two weeks and are on our way home. Our youngest, Micheal, is doing a co-op work term in Edmonton and that was all the excuse we needed to make a trip out west. I spent two semesters at the University of Alberta in Edmonton many years ago so figured it would be interesting to see the campus again. Also, I'm a born and bred westerner and will travel great distances to see the mountains. We were planning on making the trip in July but plans change and we left bright and early on June 15. Did I mention that we are travelling on a motorbike? Yup, an ST1300 Honda. It's red and has limited storage. One compartment is full of rain gear (we used all of it), extra liners for the jackets (wore them all) extra gloves and a tuque I bought 2 hours into the trip. I wore it a lot. Until today heat has not been an issue. Being warm enough and staying dry have been. But it has been an amazing trip. We crossed into the US at Sault Ste Marie and rode across parts of Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota and Montana (oil wells and development all along the highway) before heading back into Canada and Waterton Lakes National Park. It was 3C and lashing rain that day. Fortunately, they had room for us at the Prince of Wales hotel and we stayed there and waited for the sun to come out!

We left on Friday morning, heading north on the Cowboy Trail. The sun was shining and the mountains were gorgeous. As we got closer to Edmonton we could no longer see the mountains but the scenery was still beautiful, fields and hills and valleys. We passed about a kilometre or more of fence posts each on topped by a hat. Most were ball type caps but there were a few hard hats, sun hats even a bicycle helmet. Must be a story there...And oil wells everywhere. We had a great three days with Micheal. He took us to a farmers market, we saw his office and we took the LRT to the U of A campus. About the only thing I recognized was the residence I lived in! It has been a long time after all. Then we drove out to Jasper National Park. It's a four hour drive but that seems to be nothing to Albertans. We had the best weather of the trip while we were there. The mountains, rivers and lakes were glorious. The mountains always put things back in perspective for me. Sounds corny but it's true. I miss the mountains. Mike wanted to go on the new Sky Walk so we did. I wasn't that keen but I'm glad we went. It's a glassed walkway that extends out over a valley and it's the only time I've been higher than a mountain goat. Couldn't get a picture because he was just a dot to the camera but it was pretty cool.

We had passed a couple of quilt shops in the States, usually before they were open, and I was looking forward to seeing the store in Jasper. Sadly it's no longer there. Same with the one in Hinton.

Said good bye to Mike Monday night. It was such a treat to spend time with him. He's getting so grown up!

Our next stop was Drumheller and the Royal Tyrrell Museum. Dinosaurs! Loved it! And we found a quilt store, Bits and Pieces. Got a couple of fat quarters of dinosaur fabric. What else are you going to buy in Drumheller?

Lots more riding, more rain, another quilt store in Foam Lake, Saskatchewan, a couple of nights in Winnipeg with friends, more rain, more riding and here we are in Ignace. Planning to be home in a few days, hopefully without getting wet but I doubt it.

We live in an amazing, huge country. I hope you get the chance to explore a bit of it this summer or anytime. Every region is different but the people are uniformly friendly. We've met quite a few, lots of them bikers or former bikers.

I didn't get to as many quilt stores as I'd hoped but there's no room for fabric anyways. Next time it's less clothes and more empty space!

Just a reminder that July's meeting is on July 8 and it's a potluck. We will have a selection of kits from previous Christmas in July events for you to work on if you like. Please bring a basic sewing kit with you, as well as plates, cutlery, mug and your potluck dish. Hope to see you all July 8!

Bonus: what did John and I ride on our holiday? First correct answer wins a prize! Email me at sally-borland@live.ca