

July 17th, flight to Dallas, then Calgary. Late flight from Dallas because of ding in the plane. Overnight near Calgary airport.

July 18th, shop for groceries in Calgary, then drive to Castle Mountain. We had been told to expect delays on the road because the recent floods had washed out portions of the road, but that was not a problem.

We checked into the cabin...we stayed in this cabin complex 20 years ago, the last time we hiked in the Canadian Rockies, and we had forgotten that the train tracks are about 15 feet away. The complex had just had a power outage as we checked in, perhaps not a good sign? (This did not really cause us any problems during the stay.) We put away groceries, had lunch, checked the internet (which worked almost the entire trip with no problems.) and unpacked.

After gathering the hiking gear together, we set out to Kootenay National Park, hoping to hike to Paint Pots. But this was closed, because the floods had washed out the bridge to the area, so we went to Johnston Canyon and hiked that instead. Very pretty, and a nice tame hike for the first day. The hike is along the edge of a river (that is moving really fast!) to a waterfall, with the hiking path about 10 feet up the cliff side from the river. A very large chipmunk kept running up and sitting on its back legs, wanting a handout, but I couldn't get a good photo of it sitting up. It was really cute.

July 19th. We sleep soundly. I only heard 3 trains during the night, though of course I may have slept through some. The interesting thing was that I would wake up just before the train started blowing its whistle. I thought maybe it was the distant rumble that woke me. And I went right back to sleep when it had past. After breakfast, we made a lunch to carry on the hike and headed out for Lake Louise. The six glaciers hike above the lake is one that we really enjoyed 20 years ago, and wanted to see if we could manage it after all these years.

As we were driving toward Lake Louise, we had our first bear sighting of the trip. As we were driving along the main highway (two lanes each side, divided), we noticed a few cars by the side of the road, so we thought there might have been an accident. But then I noticed that there were cars on the other side of the road, and that people on both sides were out of their cars, and all looking in one direction. So of course I looked in that direction and saw a gorgeous full sized black bear, totally oblivious to all the attention, grazing on the grass a hundred feet or so away. So I said to Steve, "BEAR!!! STOP!!!" and of course he did and I got a couple of photos. The bear was determined not to look our way, so I couldn't get its face, but still!! I mean!!! So, we left the cabin about 9:30 am, and headed for Lake Louise. And saw the bear, then continued to Lake Louise. We had checked the weather before we left, and it said sunny with 15% chance of rain. Well, of course we know what that means!. BTW, we are using walking sticks now on hikes, which we bought for the trip to Turkey, and it really makes a big difference to our balance, safety, etc.

In the parking lot at the beginning of the hike, it started to rain lightly, so we were not really sure what to do, because there were some rather threatening clouds. Of course we did decide to at least start the hike, about 10:30, with the idea that if there was a downpour, we would bail. So we started the 2 km hike to the far end of the lake, which is totally flat. No problem, and the rain stopped. The next 4 km (roughly) were up

hill, with a climb with about a 1000 feet elevation gain (Lake Louise is at 5679 feet.). Some of the trail is climbing over rocks, but most is not too difficult. A few places are along a sheer drop-off, so we had to be a little careful, but the trail was wide enough to not cause any problems. One area had steel cables anchored to the rock face and a drop off on the other side, but again, the trail was wide. Along the way, we saw a couple of ginormous jays, sort of like blue jays on steroids, and some chipmunks. Along the trail, there are views back down to the lake, with the expensive hotel at the end in one direction, and various views of the different glaciers in the other direction, so really lovely. And along the sides are mountains that are very pretty, with forests everywhere, and as you walk along (well, many yards above and away from), a deep ravine carved by the glaciers.

We got to the main trail end at the top, which has two outdoor toilets, some wooden benches, and a little tea house, about 1 pm. We sat on a bench and enjoyed the amazing glaciers that were surrounding us while we ate our sandwich and rested. After resting, we decided that we were in good shape, and could continue the 1.5 km to the end of the trail, which was actually close to one of the glaciers. It was lovely, sunny, 75 degrees, so we took off our two layers of cover-ups, and Steve even took off his pants cover-ups (we were both wearing shorts underneath). This part of the hike turned out to be much more difficult, narrow and steep. About half way along, we were suddenly walking on fairly small, loose rocks, so we had to be careful about the balance. At the final turn, the trail was extremely narrow, on rocks, and with a sheer drop-off on both sides the rest of the way to the glacier (we called this the spine). After a little bit of discussion, we decided that we had come that far, we could do the rest, and in fact, * had* to do the rest for "bragging rights", so off we went. It was really ok, we just had to be slow and careful with our balance, and with the walking sticks, that was actually not a problem. Of course we both were waiting until the end of the trail to relax and take photos. The glaciers were really beautiful, and it was so great to see them so close. Within 10 feet of the end of this trail, it suddenly started to rain lightly and wind started picking up and it got cold with no warning. We decided we had to turn back, because as you know, we don't take risks with this sort of thing. With the wind, we couldn't get our cover-ups back on, and I was concerned that we needed to get back across the spine as quickly as possible in case the rain got worse, or the wind became too strong, so back we went. When we got across the spine with no problems, we put our cover-ups back on, and were pretty comfortable after that.

The rest of the trip down was uneventful, with 3 more showers, but nothing that caused us any problems. We probably went down a little faster than we would have if it had been clear. I was able to take some photos of wildflowers along the way, We covered about 15 km, so not bad for a day! We got back down about 4:30, and headed for a nearby "shopping center" to pick up a few things that we needed, then back to the cabin.

July 20th. Sore muscles! We were amused to see that the people who moved into the cabin next to ours last night are driving a cherry red convertible. After breakfast and packing our lunch, we headed to Field, BC, to see the trilobite collection at the visitors' center, and do some easy hikes in Yoho National Park. The drive to Field is very

interesting. As you leave Castle Mountain and drive north, the road is lined with large mountain peaks, some of which have glaciers. Leaving this road to turn west, you continue to be on a road with mountains and the occasional glacier. As you get close to Field, you sweep down a mountain with glorious views on either side, until you get to Field. It is really beautiful.

The visitor's center has changed over the years. In 1993, there were walls of fossils, which we loved. In 2005 those had all disappeared. Now they have two stands with lots of pull-out drawers of fossils, so not as good as in 1993, but much better than 2005. The rangers were very helpful in recommending hikes, etc.

From the visitors' center, we went to Emerald Lake. The parking lot was crowded, but we managed to get a space and get our gear together. After we had walked a few feet in the parking lot, we noticed that clouds were forming on the mountain, so we went back to get our rain parkas, which in fact we never needed. The hike around the lake is a little over 3 miles, and starts out at the lake level. There was plenty of sun, and the area had interesting wild flowers and evergreens. In open areas, it was actually hot. You could see some glaciers on the tops of the surrounding mountains, and when we got to the end of the lake, we had to cross some small streams that had come from the glacier melt. In a couple of places we had to walk in the water, but it was very shallow, and not a problem. We had brought our sandwich along and had planned to eat at the end of the lake, but it was too hot and crowded, so we decided to press on. The other side of the lake was a total surprise, quite wet with lots of moss and lots of mud in the trail. They had put boards in the worst parts, and there were even a couple of makeshift bridges, so it was not a problem to walk in. However, it was too muddy to sit and eat, so we kept walking until it got a little dryer and found a log to sit on. Toward the end of the trail, we climbed 30 yards or so, up through the forest, then dropped down to the lake again. So a very nice, easy hike.

We next drove to Takakkaw Falls, which is 1246 ft tall!! It is incredible. It's Canada's second highest waterfall (they used to say it was the highest) and the 25th highest in the world. It is incredible because it is meltoff from a glacier on the top of the mountain that somehow managed to cut one path in the rim, and you can see the entire fall from the bottom. I tried to make a movie of it, but we'll see if it worked. The hike to the falls is only a few yards, and very very easy!

We then went to Lake Louise, which was on the way back, picked up a couple of things we needed for dinner (onions and olives), and drove a small road back to Castle Mountain. We packed up for the move to Banff the next day, planning a couple of hikes in the area before checking in to BIRS, the Banff International Research Station (math).

July 21. We started the day on a long, very long, gondola ride. This one goes to 6850ft (Lake Louise is at 5679 feet) and then you hike up to a great view back on the glaciers and Lake Louise. We could see the area that we had hiked in on Thursday. It was so cool. When we got back to the top of the gondola, we were going to walk to the interpretive center, but saw a bunch of people on an observation platform talking excitedly. There was a big black bear a hundred yards or so away! The ranger wouldn't let people go to the interpretive center because there was a grizzly bear between the platform and the center, which we couldn't see, so we went back down. It was really fun.

When we were driving into Banff on the Bow River Parkway, we saw a very small black bear, and when we were coming back to the building after dinner, there was a lovely male elk with beautiful antlers eating grass, and then we saw a mother with her calf, so totally cool.

Our room at the Banff Center is nice, quite large with a table, chairs, tiny refrigerator (where we stored the leftover food from the cabin that we would take on to Jasper with us) and a microwave that we never used. Our room wasn't ready when we arrived, so we had to wait for a while. Since no one could check in until 4pm, there was a long line, so we got to see friends that were there for the meeting. When we go into the room, we unpacked, then went to dinner at the center, which was much better than we thought it would be. We had originally planned to eat out most dinners, but the food was good enough that we only ate out one night and a couple of lunches.

July 22: Steve went off to the meeting and I met Pam Aschbacher, Sheila Seitz, and Noemi Segev for breakfast. We left directly from the dining area to do a hike down to the Bow River. It was a really pretty walk through woods. The mosquitos were a real problem, but as long as we kept moving, it wasn't too bad. We had lunch in the dining area, then Sheila and Noemi walked into the town of Banff and Pam, Michael Aschbacher, Steve and I drove around the area. Our first stop was the Hoodoos, an erosion formation, which is really a fairly small area with a very short walk out to some overviews. As we started the walk, we could see a rain storm moving in, so we took rain jackets and umbrellas. We could see the sweep of the rain toward us, then it was upon us, and then it cleared. From here we drove to a short hike that we wanted to do, but the road was closed, so we drove to Vermillion Lakes (which were not red) to see the view. Then to Cave and Basin, which has been developed for tourists since we were last there. This is the hot springs area that caused Banff to be developed in the first place, and is interesting. There is a small museum now, and a board walk around the springs. The museum is built so you walk into the cave. After all this activity, it was time to get back for the afternoon talks (5 – 6pm), then dinner.

July 23: Again, Steve went off to the meeting while I met Pam, Sheila, and Noemi for breakfast. They wanted to see the waterfall at Johnston Creek, and I calculated that there was time before our plan to pick Steve and Michael up and head for the Lake Louise gondola, so off we went. It wasn't as crowded as it had been when we were the week before, so that was nice. There was a ranger talking about safety and protecting the animals, and it was bright and sunny. The only thing we had been worried about was the weather, since it was cloudy when we got up, but that turned out to not be a problem.

After the hike we came back to the center and picked up Steve and Michael, and headed back north again, this time in two cars, with Sheila and Naomi in one and the rest of us in our car. This time at the gondola we chose the "lunch and lift" option, which was \$5 more than the "lift only" option, and we had a \$5 off coupon, which made lunch free. Such a deal!! It was a little cloudy, so the photos aren't quite as great as Sunday's should be, but it was still really beautiful. But no animal sightings. Sigh. Pam and I took Steve and Michael back to the meeting so they could get to the afternoon talks, and Sheila and Noemi stayed a little longer at the top of the gondola.

Afterward, we had our only dinner out, at a pretty nice restaurant. The four couples, Michael and Pam, Sheila and Gary, Yoev and Noemi, and we, had a good time. The chef is French trained, so the cheeses were wonderful (the little toasts to go with it were way too crunchy...weird!!). He did a nice risotto with lentils, carrots, and some other unidentifiable things mixed into the rice that was really good, and kale draped across the plate. Totally cool. For dessert, the chef had gone out and picked fresh strawberries and blueberries, and they were served over a mascarpone base. Oh, my, they were good!!! We had been to this restaurant in Nov. 2005 with Michael and Pam, but I don't remember that it was this good. Maybe a new chef in the meantime.

July 24: This was the half-day at the conference, so Pam, Sheila, Noemi, and I walked down into town this morning and did a few odds and ends. There was a small farmers' market with jewelry booths, and a couple of wildlife photographers with booths. I talked with one of them for a while, and the conversation was exactly what you would expect. Long hours in the snow (he seems to do mostly snow photos, which he then sells at summer fairs). He was really excited about his animal photos, and when I complimented them on specific features, he beamed. Totally cool. We went to a rock shop that I wanted to go to, and a few other shops.

After lunch in the dining hall, the other couples set out to go as far as they could on the Icefields Parkway. Since we would do that drive in a couple of days, and had been doing things every day, we decided to do our laundry and rest up from all the activities. After we finished our laundry, we walked into the town of Banff and walked around the river and a couple of small museums.

July 25: Apparently a power generator in the town of Banff went out this morning, so power (and of course the internet) was knocked out. I woke up around 6 and finally got up a little before 7. I got the computer all set and I was about to check email when all the power went out. Almost immediately it came back on, but the smoke alarm beeped, so woke Steve up. It turned out that they had just switched over to an auxiliary generator, and only some buildings in the center had power, and it took a while for the internet to come back up. Before we left the room this morning, Steve saw a hummingbird outside our window. Then when I left to meet the women (see below for more details), a two-year-old, or so, male elk was lying in the grass. I tried to take a movie, but he really didn't do much, so fingers crossed!

The 4 women (3+me) had been meeting at the breakfast at 9am, and we had discovered yesterday that there was another spouse, Thuy, here who had been on her own and invited her to join us. Since I was up, because of the power failure, I decided that I would go up to the dining hall with Steve and talk with whoever was there until 9am, when we were meeting. About 7:45, just as we were ready to go, Noemi called and told me that the power outage had knocked out the dining hall, so they were closed. Also, there was no power in the lecture room. We decided that we should meet at 9:15, so that way we would know what was going on with the guys. I called the dining hall and asked if there was anyplace else at the center to eat, and they said all the places in their building were closed but there was one cafe that was open. It turned out that since it was the only thing open, it ran out of food. Just as I was leaving the room, I saw a workman coming up to the generator just outside our room and whack it. Hummmmm.

So we decided we would drive into the town of Banff and hope the cafes there had food, then drive on into Canmore, a town about 20 minutes drive from here, just to look around. In Banff, we found that the cafe we had gotten sandwiches at earlier in the week was open. There was a long line, but we managed to get our stuff and find a table. I got a raspberry lemon muffin that was really good. By the time we got to the front of the line, they were running out of ceramic cups, and while we were eating they were running out of food (presumably because of the power outage, people were coming in to eat instead of cooking). As we were walking toward the car, we discovered a car that was painted and had "4 Dangerous Dolls" written on it, so of course we had to have our photo taken next to it. We decided at this point to take 2 cars, since I didn't want to stay in Canmore as long as some of the other women wanted. The town was similar to Banff, though a little less touristy. The farmers' market that had been in Banff yesterday was in Canmore, so we walked around that, then walked around some of the little shops.

At 12, I started back with Thuy, since she didn't want to stay any longer, and we got back just before 1pm. Steve was waiting in the room, so we went up to the dining hall for lunch, which they said was running on a limited basis, but was very full. The selections didn't seem that limited to me, so I'm not sure what they had "limited".

Meanwhile, back at the lectures: So at 9, when the lectures start, they had decided they would do the lectures in the dark...I mean no power and no technical support, just blackboard, since there was some light. The lights came on, but just after the first talk ended, the maintenance people turned off the power so they could fix some fuses, so they moved the rest of this morning's talks to this afternoon, when the power would be back on and people could use their technology. So Steve came back to this building, and they had turned the power off here as well (presumably the guy banging on the generator.) They finally seemed to get the power back on and the internet working, and the dining hall seemed to be back up.

After lunch, we drove down to look at the Banff recreation grounds, where we had seen a mother elk and her baby 20 years ago, but it has been completely changed in 20 years. Then we drove out to a waterfall that is wider than it is tall, so interesting, and right by the road. Then back to the talks.

July 26: Steve was the session chair, and a lot of people left early. I packed up and got everything ready for check out at 12. We had lunch, stopped at the grocery store, and then headed for Jasper.

The drive along the Icefields Parkway is really wonderful. There are lots of hikes and waterfalls and lakes and glaciers along the road. We stopped at Peyto Lake, which is a short distance from the road. The lake has the outline of a dog, and is a beautiful milky blue because of the glacier melt that feeds it. We stopped at a couple of glacier viewpoints and a waterfall viewpoint to take photos, and then stopped at the Athabasca Glacier, which is close to the road. There is a fairly easy hike up to a view of the glacier. 20 years ago we walked on the glacier, but that's not allowed now without a guide, and there is quite a bit of water in front of the glacier that was not there 20 years ago.

Because of the stops, we got into Jasper later than we planned, but it didn't take us long to unpack and cook dinner. After we ate and washed the dishes, I was just

getting ready to wash my hair (and then dry it with the hair dryer so it wouldn't be wet and disgusting all night), when the power went out! (Because we didn't get invited to this meeting until so late, all the cabins in the Jasper area were booked by the time we started looking, so this is just a hotel, so not as much "out in the forest" as we would like." But we were able to get a kitchen so could cook for ourselves.) There were several lightning strikes and lovely thunder. Not much rain, but enough so the smell of the evergreens wafted into the room. It was really wonderful. We had the two windows open so we could hear the wind in the tree outside the window. It was still somewhat light (this happened around 10pm, I think, and of course we were further north) so we had enough light from the windows that I could find the flashlight. We used the flashlight to take baths, and used up the hot water. It's a big place with lots of rooms, so other people were probably also using the hot water, of course. But I didn't wash my hair, since the dryer wouldn't have worked. We were just drifting off to sleep, about 11:30, to the soft rain and wind sounds when the power came back on!!

July 27th: Our first stop was the park office, to see if we could find out the condition of the trails we want to hike, after the rain. And what the chance of getting rained on on the trails would be. There are two long hikes we want to do, so we assumed that we would get wet, in any case. There were lots of things in the gift shop that I thought I would buy before we left Jasper, but we wanted to get out on the trail. On the way to the trail, we passed several elk grazing by the side of the road, which was really great.

We hiked Edith Cavell Meadows, which is only an 8.5 km trail, but with a 1500 ft rise in altitude. They estimated 3-5 hours for the hike, and we did it in 5 hours, including a stop to eat our sandwich plus lots of stops for photos and to catch our breath.

The mountain, Edith Cavell, is 11,033 ft high, and we've seen various estimates of the altitude of the meadows, around 7,005 feet, but the hike continues above the meadows, so I'm not sure how high we actually were. I'm very curious to track down the altitudes of various places that we have been on this trip, since we live at low altitude in Chicago.

There is a well paved path for the first few hundred feet, out to a view of Angel glacier. The glacier used to have two "wings" that reached out on either side of the tongue of the glacier, so did kind of look like an angel. Now, with climate change, the right (from the observer's point of view) "wing" has melted, so it's a very lopsided angel. When we were here 20 years ago, I'm sure there were still two "wings" so it was a shock to see only one. Below Angel glacier is a lake, formed by the glacier, with a glacier around the lake and icebergs in the lake. It is really beautiful.

Our memory is that 20 years ago, you hiked through a fairly flat area of mountain meadow up to the glacier lake, with the glacier hanging above you. Now, after leaving the paved path, there is a narrow path up into the woods, and the first few yards are nice and smooth, then there is a switchback and after that is a lot of rock and a few streams that you need to cross (they have put large rocks across the streams, so we didn't actually get wet.) You hike up along the debris field of the glacier for a while (a long while!) with piles of rock on one side and forest on the other, before climbing into the forest. After a lot of forest climbing, you suddenly come out to beautiful views of the glacier and the lake below. More climbing gets you up above the forest, with views of surrounding mountains as well. When we got to this point, we had our sandwich, and a

beautiful ground squirrel came out to see if we would share. I was trying to film the waterfall below Angel glacier (I'm still trying to figure out the movie feature on my camera, so I hope it worked) when Steve spotted a larger animal scampering over some rocks below. I'm not quite sure what it is...not a beaver, and maybe too big for a marmot. I think I got some photos.

Then it started to hail on us. I mean. Really. I actually felt a cold breeze and we put on all of our coverups, including our rain gear, just before the hail started, so I was really proud of myself. The one thing I had forgotten was our gloves, which were way down in the car in the parking lot. I mean, dang. So we tried to keep our hands up inside our rain gear sleeves, but the hand that was holding the walking stick was always freezing.

Off we went, into the hail, to climb to the summit. Fortunately, there were only about 2 or 3 minutes when the wind whipped our faces that we were actually uncomfortable, except for the hand. Then we managed to get the wind behind us as we climbed.

We were now on fairly rough trail which turned into small rocks and got steeper and steeper toward the top. The hail stopped and the sun tried to come out, and that was the end of precipitation for the rest of the hike. I was worried about hiking back down over this area, but it was actually much easier than it looked, and of course we were careful. It was mostly our knees that complained. We took a different trail back down, which was much steeper than the trail we took up, so we got down faster than we expected. The views were spectacular, and when we got back to the forest, there were again lots of wildflowers and "meadows". The last part of the trail was the same trail that we had climbed along the rocks built up by the glacier, so that actually helped, since we knew exactly where we were.

Our plan was to take small hikes the next day, to let our muscles recover, and the weather was supposed to be worse, so we knew we would have to adjust to the weather. But during the day, I developed a problem with my eye, and overnight we decided that I needed to get to medical help.

July 28th. Steve spent some time calling around to find out where we should go while I packed up. Steve discovered that the best place was Edmonton, a 4-hour drive, so we got there as fast as we safely could. After time in the emergency room, I was turned over to an ophthalmologist. He could not find a retinal tear, which is what we were worried about, and said I had a posterior vitreous detachment with a hemorrhaging event. The danger when this happens is that the retina might tear, which would be very serious. So the blood in my eye is an annoyance, but not dangerous. I was referred to another ophthalmologist for the next morning, so Steve found us a place to stay for the night near Edmonton.

July 29th. The ophthalmologist confirmed the findings of the day before, and did another very careful exam of both eyes. I'll have a followup at home in 3 weeks. We decided to go to the Royal Alberta Museum, which wasn't far from the ophthalmologist's office, and it was really fun. Lots of minerals, dinosaurs, etc. Afterward, we went to the Devonian Botanic Gardens, had lunch, and walked around the gardens. No dinosaurs, but one small section of plants from that era. A nice Japanese garden. We then drove to

Calgary, where Steve had been able to get the same hotel we had already booked for our last night in Canada.

July 30th. This would have been our day to leave Jasper and hike a couple of places on the Icefields Parkway. We had been to the Alberta badlands briefly in 2005, and had enjoyed the Royal Tyrrell Museum, so we decided that we would spend our last day in Canada there. The Alberta Badlands are of course nothing like the US badlands that we went to in 1981, but they are cute. And they do have a small area of hoodoos. Having just been to the mother of all hoodoos in Cappadocia, we still thought they were cute. Drumheller, the town at the center of the Badlands, is now making a big deal of the dinosaur discoveries in the area, which is really great. They had dinosaur statues around town, and the information center has a statue that is the "world's largest dinosaur".

The Royal Tyrrell Museum is even better than when we were there in 2005, and has lots of educational exhibits for kids that are great, and a play room for kids with slides and so forth in the form of dinosaurs. They make a big deal about evolution and I'm really impressed that they are working so hard to educate young people in science. The museum was absolutely packed with families, and many of them have very small children. There were archeologists there to talk with both the adults and the children, and there were classes for children going on. Totally awesome!!

When we got back to Calgary, we went to dinner at a restaurant that we had chosen after looking at several lists, comparing web menus, etc. We really weren't sure how good it would be. It was definitely good. They brought an amuse bouche that was really good. It was a small slice of eggplant that had been grilled (about 1/2 an inch thick), topped with a creamy homemade ricotta sauce, then one homemade potato chip and half a cherry tomato. The potato chip wasn't as good as it should have been, but everything else was great. They made a really lovely French fry, and our appetizer was arugula, really good cantaloupe, and julienned carrots, etc., with a drizzle of vinegar.

July 31st The trip home was filled with irony. As the plane was ready to back out of the gate, the push-back tractor slammed into it, so we had to wait for someone off-site to approve us for takeoff. Of course that delay made us miss our flight to Chicago, so we had dinner in the Dallas airport before catching a later flight.



Johnston Canyon Falls



Takakkaw Falls



Castle Mountain



Six glaciers hike



Six glaciers hike





From top of Gondola



Athabasca Glacier



Wildlife



Hoodoos near Banff



Peyto Lake



Icefield Parkway glacier



Edith Cavell Meadows



Drumheller



Alberta Badlands