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Milwaukee Tools had a display booth set up at the BBQ Celebration.



Charlie and Debbie Buchanan stopped by the Robert Crowell Sales Inc (RCIS) display.

Hoogerbrugge Reaches Vancouver Island

By Linda Harrington

Early in 2020, Shoreline Journal readers met Arie Hoogerbrugge who was a few months into his journey pedaling across Canada in the midst of winter, hoping to eventually travel 55,000 kilometers to the tip of Argentina. His journey began at the Terry Fox Memorial in St. Johns, NL last November 12th. Kim Hillier befriended Arie as he pedaled through Great Village on January 17th.

Arie recently reached out to let our readers know he had made it to Vancouver Island and would soon be completing his cross Canada journey, arriving at the Terry Fox Memorial in Victoria, BC. He has pedaled over 12,000 kilometers the past 11 months through not only extreme weather and difficult terrain but also during a pandemic!

Each province presented its own set of challenges after leaving Nova Scotia on February 9th. In New Brunswick, the weather got colder and the snow really started to accumulate, presenting some of the coldest nights on his travels. Cycling along the St. Lawrence River in Quebec was also pretty cold and windy.

Ontario presented unique challenges mainly due to the beginning of Covid-19. "I was stuck in Kingston for almost 60 days due to Covid-19 and then I had a few minor post Covid-19 challenges getting back on the road, mainly the inability to charge batteries and blog because restaurants were still closed except for drive-thru's. Also keeping in mind Ontario is a huge and very hilly province. Ontario is a demanding province to cross."

After overcoming these challenges, Arie found Manitoba rather easy to cross especially compared to the headwinds he would face on the prairies of Saskatchewan, and the diverse terrain in Alberta. "The first part of Alberta was the badlands which felt like more prairie vastness. The second part of Alberta was the Rockies, but things got beautiful really quick," says Arie, "But physically there were the mountains that needed to be climbed."

The last leg of his cross Canada journey was not going to take it easy on him, with the numerous hills and mountains of British Columbia. Arie says he always seemed to be fighting a headwind.

Time spent throughout Atlantic Canada changed Arie's daily ride routine and cycling 70 to 100 km's per day became a realistic goal. "It depends on hills, headwinds and how late I start my day. Since my bike ride evolved into what it did in Atlantic Canada I have stopped having any sort of expectation. Though I realize that I am months behind where I thought I would be."

One thing that surprised Arie along the roadway were the minimal wildlife encounters. He anticipated seeing lots of bears and wildlife in Banff and Jasper and throughout BC, but he only saw 7 bears since Northern Ontario. He thinks most of the big wildlife was higher up the mountains at this time of year. Arie appreciated seeing some unique reptiles he hadn't seen before including a western painted turtle, a red sided garter snake, an alligator lizard and a red legged frog.

After almost 300 days on the road, Arie is also surprised he still has all the motivation he had on day 1, saying he has never wanted to pack it in.

The generosity and amazing interactions, connections and memories crossing Canada have never stopped for Arie, even after leaving Atlantic Canada. "Every day, I continue to make and have the most amazing experiences of my life. I had a record 54 hosts, which is by far a record for any cyclist but especially amazing during a pandemic," he says adding, "I don't think the hosting element of this ride would have ever become what it was, if it wasn't for the generosity of Atlantic Canada."

Covid-19 has presented minor frustrations for Arie besides the closure of campgrounds and washrooms and not being able to blog or charge batteries. He had to change his planned route, including a visit to the Canadian Arctic. "Some places that I would have liked to visit were closed which probably frustrated me the most. But then the places that I did visit were generally very quiet and empty of people allowing for better photo opportunities." He is not too concerned about the increased outbreaks of Covid-19 in the US as he crosses the border. "I think I am simply looking forward to actually starting the next phase and to be heading south and not west. My only real concern about Covid-19 in the US is to simply get cleared at US customs when I fly into Seattle. After that in a way I don't have the luxury to worry about much beyond that. It won't help me or my ride."

During the next phase, Arie will cycle along the beautiful



Arie Hoogerbrugge reaches Terry Fox Memorial in Victoria, BC after cycling over 12,000km across Canada. He passed through Great Village last January in the early months of his journey. (Submitted)

west coast of the United States where he is excited to see the Giant Redwoods of California. He plans to ride onto San Francisco, Yosemite National Park, Death Valley National Park, Utah, Arizona and to The Grand Canyon, San Diego and then into Mexico.

So, what has the journey across Canada been like from the seat of a bicycle? Arie describes it as 275+ days of amazing, life changing, memo-

orable experiences he will remember for the rest of his life. "Perhaps one thing I have learned about life in general is that nothing epic happens on the couch and that one way to really change your life and who you are as a person is to make your dreams and goals about 1,000 times bigger than they are and then go for it!"

We wish Arie well as he starts the next phase of his journey.

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