

# Trans Canada Trek Towards UPEI: British Columbia

by **Rebecca Shorten**

Part 1 of 9

For a year now, I have been on a path towards UPEI; from when I first discovered its existence in the spring, to applying (and getting accepted) in January, to conditioning my family that I was leaving for a while, and to working through the summer so I can actually get here. My friend who travelled with me was accepted into Queens, so the two of us left our anchored lives for the unknown. The day we left Vancouver, it was so hot I wasn't comfortable in my own skin. It was at least 35°C. We loaded up the Vitara carefully, so as to fit as much stuff as possible. There wasn't enough room, so I had to leave some stuff behind. I wish I'd planned better for space restrictions. The Vitara was packed to bursting; I was amazed we were able to fit ourselves in. I was so busy planning in the last few months, that I hadn't realized I was actually leaving until I saw the tears in my mom's eyes, and even my dad was fighting them back. That was the hardest part of the trip. Leaving.

We were soon on the road heading east. Since I can't drive I was the "trustworthy navigator," as my friend once said. I would say "rusty navigator" is more like it. I get lost in the city I was born in, and without the mountains to tell me which way is north I wasn't so sure we would always be on the right track. But here I was, map in hand and me squinting at it as if that would make me understand it a bit better. We were taking the more northern route even though there was a bit more to see on the southern route. The 40°C weather on the southern route helped us make that decision.

Besides, we wanted to see Banff and other typical Rocky Mountain sights. By the time we had driven about 500 km east, we had gone as far east as I'd ever been (driving, that is). So from then on, everything was new to me.

By the end of second day, we had driven almost to Revelstoke which is at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Most people think that the whole area that flows down from Alaska through BC and into Washington State is Rocky Mountains. The truth is that there are several different ranges with different names that make up the area, such as the Coast Mountains, the Monashee Mountains, the Cariboo Mountains, and the Selkirk Mountains to name a few. We stopped at a town called Craigellachie, the site of the "last spike" where the eastern rails of the CPR railway joined with the western rails in 1885. The offer to build the CPR, linking the west to the east, was the bribe from John A. Macdonald that enticed BC to join Confederation in 1871.

We had to find a place to camp for the night. We asked the lady in the Craigellachie museum if she knew of anywhere we could camp. She told us there was a massive baseball tournament at Revelstoke, with about 100 or so little league teams playing, so we weren't sure how we would find a good campsite, but we lucked out with Frog Falls logging campground. BC has hundreds, possibly even thousands, of logging roads snaking into some very remote areas. The campgrounds in these areas are run by the logging companies, not the province, and there are no road signs leading to them. One finds them through luck or word of mouth. We passed just

such a road, so we stopped to turn around. At the place where we stopped to turn around, we saw a man come out of his house wearing nothing but his underwear and cowboy hat. We looked at each other, rolling our eyes, and said "Oh, brother," and took off in the opposite direction. We left behind the hot, dry Okanagan earlier in the day. As we drove along the logging road, the air was cooler and greener. If you have ever been to a coastal forest, you would know what I mean about "green" air. Your eyes are filled with the lush green ferns and undergrowth all around, tall Douglas firs, lodgepole pines, hemlock, red cedar, and a host of other trees towering above you. The scent is a mixture of pine, cedar, damp earth, and wet leaves. You can hear birds singing, woodpeckers knocking, and the occasional crow cawing. It seems strange to find such a place deep in the mountains. It was only a small pocket of this "coastal" forest, with many of the same plants one would find on the coast. I was thrilled to have the chance to camp in a place so similar to home. I will not have that chance for a long time.

The next day we went through Roger's Pass – the highest, northerly, eastmost place I've ever been. We saw a helicopter and some men put out a couple of small forest fires while we were there. It sends a shiver down the spine when a curl of smoke becomes visible above the trees. At this point the fires in BC were nowhere near as bad as they were to become, and yet whole valleys already had a thin veil of smoke concealing the mountain vistas. We continued on though Kicking Horse Pass and then on into Banff National Park in Alberta.

## Cradle to Cradle - global impacts of our consumer society

A cross-Canada bicycle tour called the Otesha Project will give a multimedia presentation, sponsored by World University Service of Canada (WUSC), at Lecture Theatre B in the Atlantic Veterinary College at UPEI beginning at 7pm on Wednesday, September 17th. This team of 16 young people, working in partnership with Youth Challenge International and the Sierra Youth Coalition, are working to raise awareness about the global impacts of our consumer society, while also articulating hope and solutions.

The presentation will include "Cradle to Cradle- Challenging the Conventional Cradle to Grave Interpretation of Consumer Goods". With a focus on the secret lives of everyday consumer goods, Otesha presenter Katherine Ryan states, "The cradle to cradle concept envisions a world of intriguing possibility. With cradle to cradle, it's not always about personal sacrifice in the name of sustainability. It's about consumers taking personal action towards reaching an understanding of the complexities and interrelationships of the products they consume. Cradle to cradle is also about creating a world where consumer waste is actually beneficial to the planet and it's inhabitants through the engineering of products that mirror nature's efficient design (compostable running shoes anyone?)."

The Otesha Project, which means reason to dream in Swahili, was created as a means to empower and enable Canadian youth to adopt sustainable lifestyles. The tour will conclude on October 10th 2003 in Newfoundland, having reached over 100,000 youth either online or in person, and biked over 8,500 km! Go online to [WWW.OTESHA.CA](http://WWW.OTESHA.CA) for photos and more information, or call Tony Reddin at 675-4093.