

Gary C Worrell

From: Gary C Worrell [gcw@igx.net]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2010 11:37
To: gcw@igx.net
Subject: Postcard
Attachments: Map.gif; SewardHighway10a.jpg; SewardHighway11a.jpg; WhittierTunnel01a.jpg; Whittier08a.jpg; Barney01a.jpg; Ralph01a.jpg

Hello from Anchorage, Alaska.

Yesterday I had to drive from Seward back to Anchorage. If you aren't tired of looking at time-lapse video, here is the trip back, recording 1 frame per second playing at 15 frames per second. I edited out some of the long stops to make the video shorter.

<http://igx.net/Video/AlaskaCAM/SewardToAnchorage100120-1Sec15FPS.wmv>

I started at 9AM about a half hour before sunrise. The first obstacle to overcome was getting the gas tank open on the rental vehicle. The outer shell of the car was iced over, and the lever to open the cover was inside the car. I couldn't pull up the lever and reach the cover to pry it open at the same time. Finally I jammed something under the lever to hold it in the opening position, then used my trusty pocket knife to pry the cover open.

As I said in the last postcard, I wanted to visit Whittier. There is only one access road to Whittier, and you have to go through the Whittier Tunnel. The 2.5 mile tunnel was built as a railroad tunnel through Maynard Mountain, completed in 1943. At that time, the only way to get a motor vehicle to/from Whittier was to put it on a train.

In 1998, modifications began to make the tunnel a shared rail and roadway, one lane, one direction at a time. About every 45 minutes, the direction of travel through the tunnel changes for vehicles, and when a train comes along, vehicle traffic stops. I waited about 40 minutes going to Whittier, and 40 minutes again coming from Whittier. I wasn't too bored, I met Barney & Ralph while waiting.

The town of Whittier is small, the picture covers almost the entire town. It's barely alive in the winter, but during the warmer months, it's flooded with cruise ships, tourists and fishermen. I chatted with a woman who was walking along the road as I toured the town. She was a nurse practitioner at the local clinic. She indicated that the year long residents were "nitty," in your business, everybody knows everyone people. Most of them live in a single high-rise condo complex high over the port. Regardless, the local view was impressive.

After leaving Whittier, I went to Girdwood where there is a modern ski resort. A friend (one of the newest Postcard List members) suggested going to the Chair 5 to eat. It took some hunting to find it, but the video proves I was there.

Not much more time here, maybe I'll get to explore a little more this afternoon.

Cheers,
G.













