

Local travel writer shines light on the beauty of Alaska

As a student at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School, Andrew King struggled to keep up.

Living with anxiety and wanting to be anywhere but in the classroom, he hit his stride when he was able to get out of the sandy-coloured walls of Dunning Avenue into the community through co-op placements.

He found 'getting out into the real world' helped him 'get through the rough points,' and now, into the much wider world, he is staking a claim as a travel writer with a new book on the wonders of the far north.

King recently published 'A Visual Journey to Alaska', a book that combines his first-hand observations from his journey to the 49th state, not to mention the stunning visuals he collected along the way.

'During the pandemic, writing was something I wanted to try and see if it would stick,' King tells The Auroran. 'I have done a lot of travelling over the years and with travel being hit hard I just wanted to have something out there so people could have something to look forward to when they can eventually get this virus all settled.'

King's love affair with Alaska began quite by chance.

One summer while helping his parents plan for a family vacation, they wanted to visit a place that was new for everyone. Browsing cruise options, they happened upon Alaska and, King says, he was mesmerized by both the scenery and the way it made him feel.

'It made me feel calm, relaxed, and it is just a great place to go and see,' he says. 'I wanted to get that whole immersive experience of Alaska, including the ice and seeing wildlife you don't normally see here in Canada. I used my photography and my personal experiences to capture memories and it came to the point of getting to the book. It was about sharing it with others and helping people feel better about how things could be after this is over and have a whole new experience.'

Since his first trip up north, King has explored many parts of the world, including cruises throughout the Caribbean and trips overseas to locales as varied as Italy, Malta, Greece, Australia, New Zealand, and transatlantic cruises. So struck was he by his cruises through the Caribbean, they will be subject of his next book that is already in the works.

As he works on his next book, King says he's itching to get back out there and see more of the world.

At the start of the pandemic, he had a trip to Europe planned which, of course, had to be cancelled.

He's tentatively re-booked a trip for the summer ahead: a cruise to the evocative landscapes of Iceland.

Now that he's been bitten by the writing bug, will this be the subject of a third book from King?

Only time will tell, but, as he says, 'A Visual Journey to Alaska was a big accomplishment in my life. It would be great to see someone who goes from a struggling background to an accomplished writer.'

For more on the book, visit [amazon.ca](#).

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter