

Trip 3 – Episode #8: Around and About Nova Scotia

After Lunenburg, we had planned to not plan. (We're especially good at that.) We just drove south and decided we'd circumnavigate the province and see what we could see.

Our first stop was Summerside, where Jim used to go with his family. And it was easy to see why. In a province not known for white, sandy beaches, Summerside is a rarity.



Although the water was a tad too chilly for my thin Mediterranean blood, there were lots of swimmers enjoying it.





The sand glistened with golden flecks. And the inn overlooking the beach looked like a wonderful place to stay.



But we didn't stay. We had more places to see.

Along the way, I noticed this sign announcing that we were approaching Port Mouton:



“Sheep Overboard” got me curious so I checked it out.

Of course, there’s a story. On May 13, 1604, Samuel de Champlain and his crew landed at this spot and built a temporary camp. According to the story, a sheep, excited to see land after the long journey, jumped overboard and swam to shore. So they named it Port Mouton (sheep, en français). Although apparently the locals pronounce it 'Port Mah-TOON'.

Our next stop was Shelburne, which turned out to be so charming.



In the “suburbs” there were elegant homes like this, which was actually a Youth Wellness Centre.



But then we entered the historic area, which had maintained its heritage beautifully.







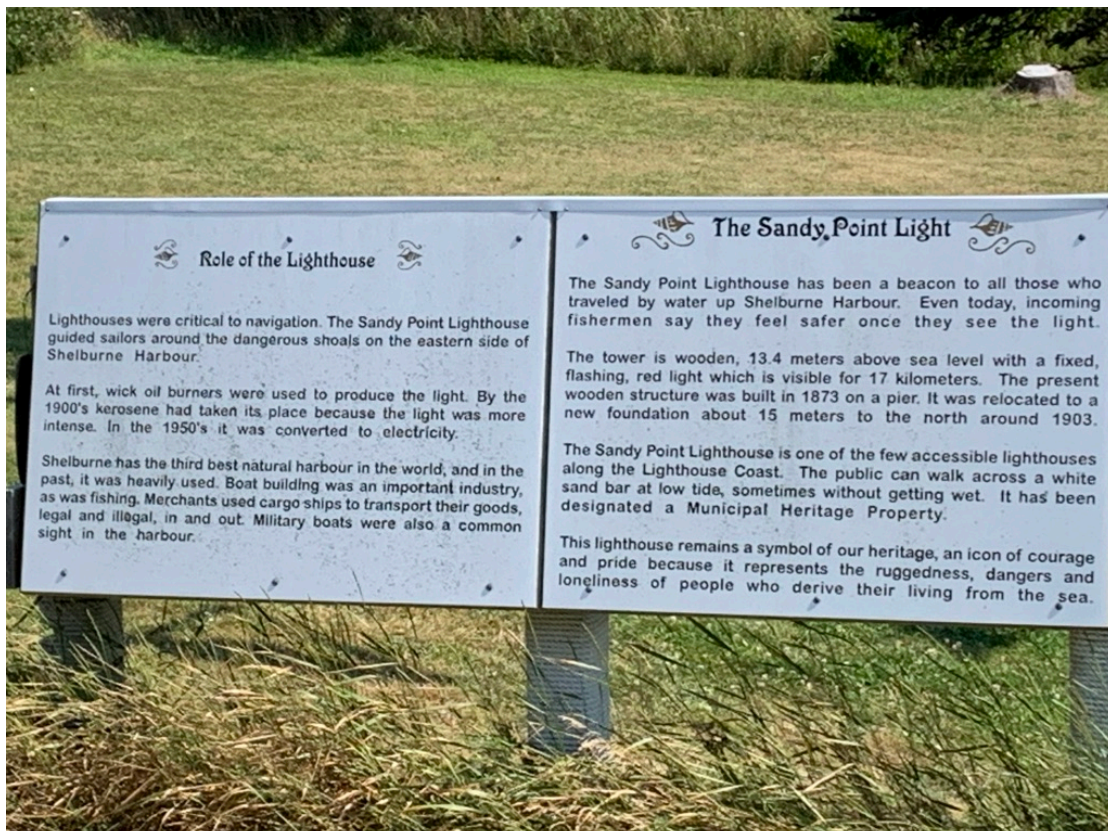
We found a spot by the water to have our lunch.



And enjoyed watching some local kids jumping off the pier.

One of our most valuable travel apps is called iOverlander, and along with campgrounds, places to get water and propane and other helpful information, it also shows you places where you can “boondock” – or camp for free. It’s not always guaranteed. Often people will report that the place is no longer available to campers. Or sometimes the place is inaccessible for an RV like Charles.

But Sandy Point Lighthouse, which came up on our route, turned out to be perfect.





There was a large, flat parking area near a community centre. We had the place to ourselves. We could barbecue our dinner. And we had such beautiful views that evening and the next morning.







In the morning, the tide had receded, and we were almost able to walk all the way out to the lighthouse.



It was a perfect boondocking experience, thanks to iOverlander.

We continued down to the southern tip of Nova Scotia and then over toward the Bay of Fundy. As usual, so much colour and beauty, natural and human-made.





As we traveled, the Acadian influence became more and more prevalent.





We were, after all,
driving along the
Evangeline Trail.



There was apparently a lot happening on Hardscratch Road.



We passed right through Yarmouth, which upheld the Nova Scotia tradition of colourful, elegant homes and buildings.





We had a wonderful surprise when we suddenly saw a sign pointing to the Maud Lewis Memorial Site.



It turned out to be the site where the uniquely talented artist lived with her husband, creating and selling her delightful paintings and selling them along this sideroad. What a thrill to happen upon it.

The tiny home that she and Everett lived in was uprooted and transported to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in Halifax, but this replica is the actual size of the original. It's hard to imagine how two people could live in such a cramped space – especially with all of Maud's paintings!



When you peer inside, you can see not only how little space there was, but also that there was actually a second floor where they slept, until Maud's arthritis made it impossible for her to go upstairs.



The small garden was tidy and colourful.

And I loved the way they added a couple of her deer on one of the information pieces.



We were so glad we stumbled upon it.



We continued skirting around the edges of the province, enjoying the views around Annapolis Royal.

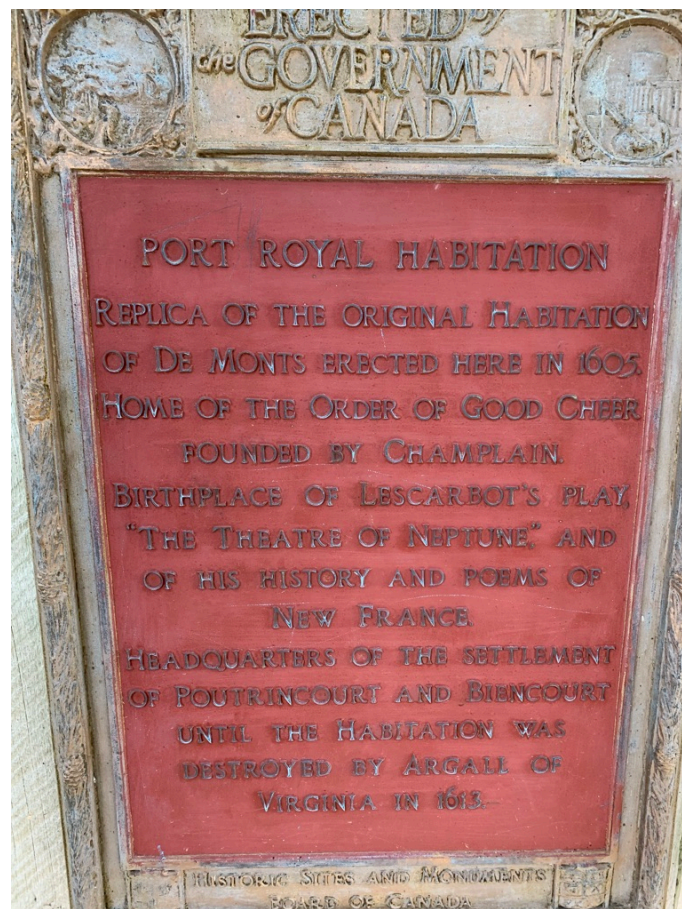




We stopped briefly at Port-Royal National Historic Site – long enough to realize we should probably have allowed for more time there.

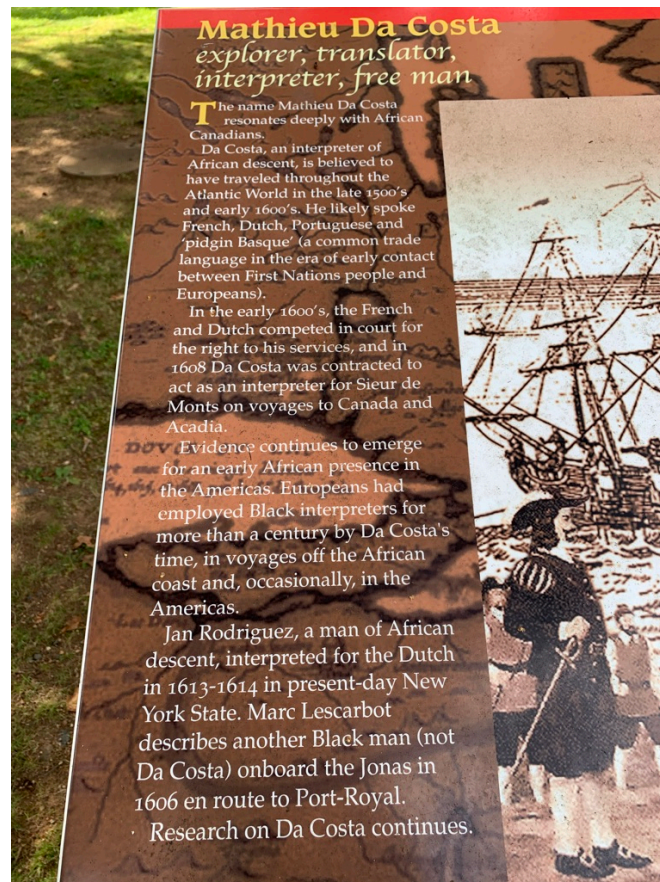


There was so much history here, including early theatrical productions



... And evidence of the important influence of Africans in the development of the New World.

Next time, we'll stop for longer and learn more.



Continuing along the Annapolis River to the town of Paradise, I kept trying to capture the colourful homes, sometimes only catching parts of them as we drove by. So, not great photos, but great houses.





If you gotta go, I guess this is the place to do it.



I couldn't help noticing the beautiful hanging planters throughout the town, and then noticed that many of them were sponsored. What a great idea. We should try that in our neighbourhood!





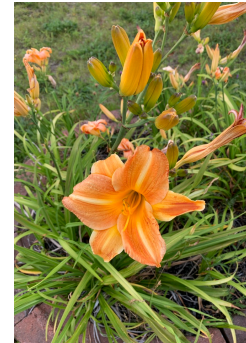
Eventually we got to our destination for the night. There are a number of organizations that offer a variety of services to RVers. If you join Harvest Host, you can find properties all over North America where owners of vineyards, breweries, golf courses and historical monuments will allow RVers to camp for free overnight. The expectation is that you'll pay for products or services offered in exchange for free camping.

There's also Boondockers Welcome, which is simply a collection of people who have property and are willing to let RVers to camp overnight.

We've only taken advantage of these properties a few times, but they've always worked out well. That night, we were trying out a Boondockers Welcome spot for one night, in a place called Victoria Vale.



It was quite nice, secluded, surrounded by woods and lovely flowers. Nobody else was there. Not even the owners! But they let us know we were welcome to stay on their property.



It was a nice stop, thanks to Harvest Host, Welcome Boondockers and the elusive owners of the property.

We decided not to take this turn.



Instead, we drove through Margaretsville, in honour of Jim's sister, Margaret.



There were lots of reminders of the significance of fishing and boating in Nova Scotia.



But also lots of farmland.



And every so often vineyards.



We stopped at this terrific café. If you're ever in Kingston, Nova Scotia, go to the Green Elephant! We just grabbed a coffee and a croissant, but the breakfasts looked amazing!



We tried to visit our friend Pam, in Berwick, but unfortunately she wasn't home. Off chauffeuring a neighbour to the doctor, which is typical of Pam.



More beautiful countryside...









Not really sure what to say about this one...



The red, muddy water provided evidence that the Bay of Fundy and Minas Basin were. Not far away.



This is the only photo I actually got of the Minas Basin, because I had to give Jim a break from doing all the driving. Maybe on the way home, we'll go by it again and I can get some shots. It would be worth it!



After a while, Jim got behind the wheel again, and I was free to snap more shots.





And finally we got to Tatamagouche, on the north shore of Nova Scotia. When we were in a campground in New Brunswick, we met a very nice couple who had recently relocated from Scotland and they recommended going to Tatamagouche. That was a good enough reason to go!



It was a cute little town, with some nice shops and a restaurant recommended by our friend Pam, the Chowder House. She was right!



But the best part of Tatamagouche was the campground we found there, Sunset Watch. Perched on a point, with about a 280-degree view of the water, it was so breathtaking, we immediately decided to stay for two nights.



And, wow, did it live up to its name! The first night, there were thunderstorm warnings, which proved to be true.

As the dark clouds rolled in and the wind rose, blowing our neighbour's furniture around, I was convinced there would be no sunset that night.



But I was wrong!

Even as the storm was pummeling us, there it was!



And then, this.



And eventually this.



From the first sign of pink to the last ember, the sunset lasted over an hour and a half!

We spent the next day enjoying our perfect perch by the water.



And exploring the rocks and marine life left exposed by the receding tide.





Although you can't really tell by this shot, those little dots out there are seals. We could hear them barking and howling much of the day, and we'd been told that they sometimes sunned themselves on the rocks closer to us, but unfortunately, that never happened. Still it was fun to spy on them from a distance and hear their conversations.



The only thing we (and especially Jim) didn't love about this place was the voracious mosquitos.



As the sun began its decline, we wondered if Sunset Watch would again live up to its name.



Though not as dramatic as the night before, it did not disappoint.



Again, the time
between the first
photo...

... And the
last photo...



... was over an
hour.



And the next morning I even managed to catch the sunrise!



We were so happy we met the couple from Scotland who recommended Tatamagouche. Sadly, I lost their contact information and didn't get a chance to thank them.

But perhaps we'll meet again. They were building a house in Nova Scotia and said they intend to sign it on to Boondockers Welcome. So, maybe we'll meet again, on their property!

As for us, we were leaving Nova Scotia and heading to Prince Edward Island!