

Charles Summer 25 #9:

Neighbourly Advice



By now, it must have become clear to anyone who's been reading these blogs, that we don't plan our trips. Unless we know there's a place we really want to go to and we're concerned it might be booked, we never reserve campsites more than a day or two in advance. That would drive some people crazy. And sometimes, it can lead to slightly stressful moments when we're not quite sure where we're going to end up for the night.

But for the majority of our trips, we decide, as we travel, where we're going to go next. As a result, when someone we meet along the way tells us about a special spot, we're able to act on it.

We've discovered some great places thanks to neighbourly advice.

During our stay at The Ovens Natural Park, we got advice from two different neighbours. Sadly, I didn't get a photo of the first neighbours who gave us advice. But they're now blog followers, so here's a shout out to Jonathan and Annette, who told us we should go to Bridgetown, Nova Scotia.

We'd never even heard of Bridgetown. But when we found it on the map, we saw that it was in the vicinity of Annapolis Royal, which we wanted to return to, so we decided to check it out.

We had another perfect day for a drive.





And as soon as we saw the homes on the outskirts of Bridgetown, we could tell it was a special place.



The welcome sign was truly welcoming.



And all the homes and buildings we saw were distinct and well cared for.







Is it just me, or does this door look like it's smiling?



The shops looked interesting, although by the time we got there, pretty much everything was closed.



I can't believe I've never seen this open/closed sign on a shop before. It's brilliant!



(Sadly they were never open while we were there, so I didn't get a shot of the OPEN version. Nor did we get a chance to sample their coffee.)

And I can't say I've ever seen a town brag about its lawn bowling champions.



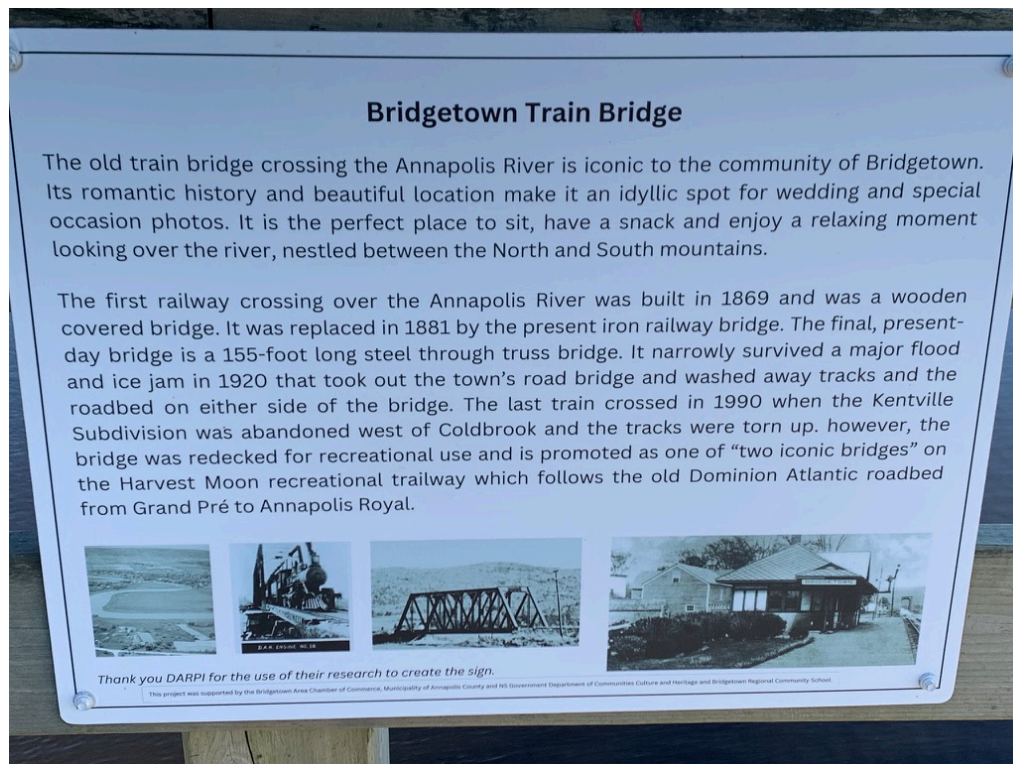
The beautiful Annapolis River carves through the town.



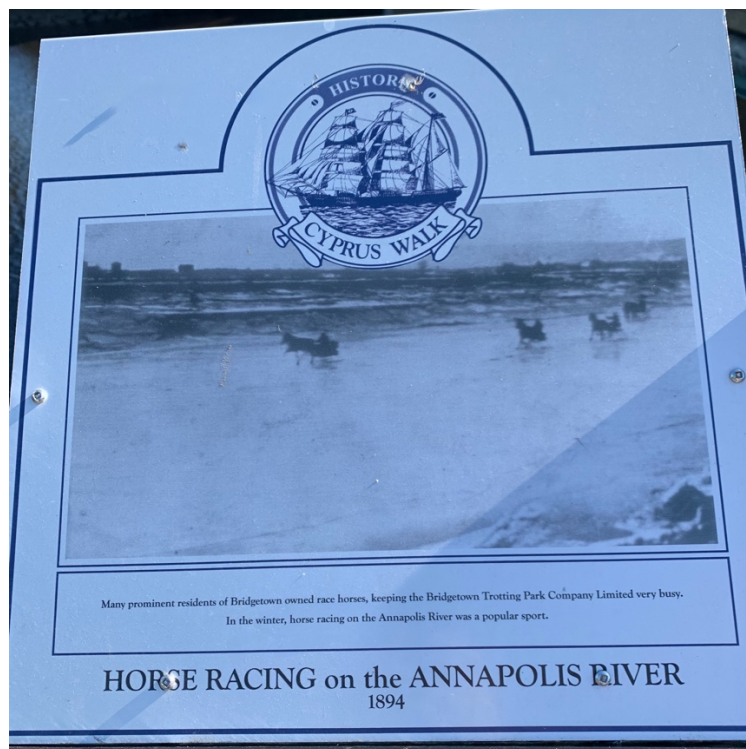
The former train trestle is now a trail for hikers and bikers and ATVs.



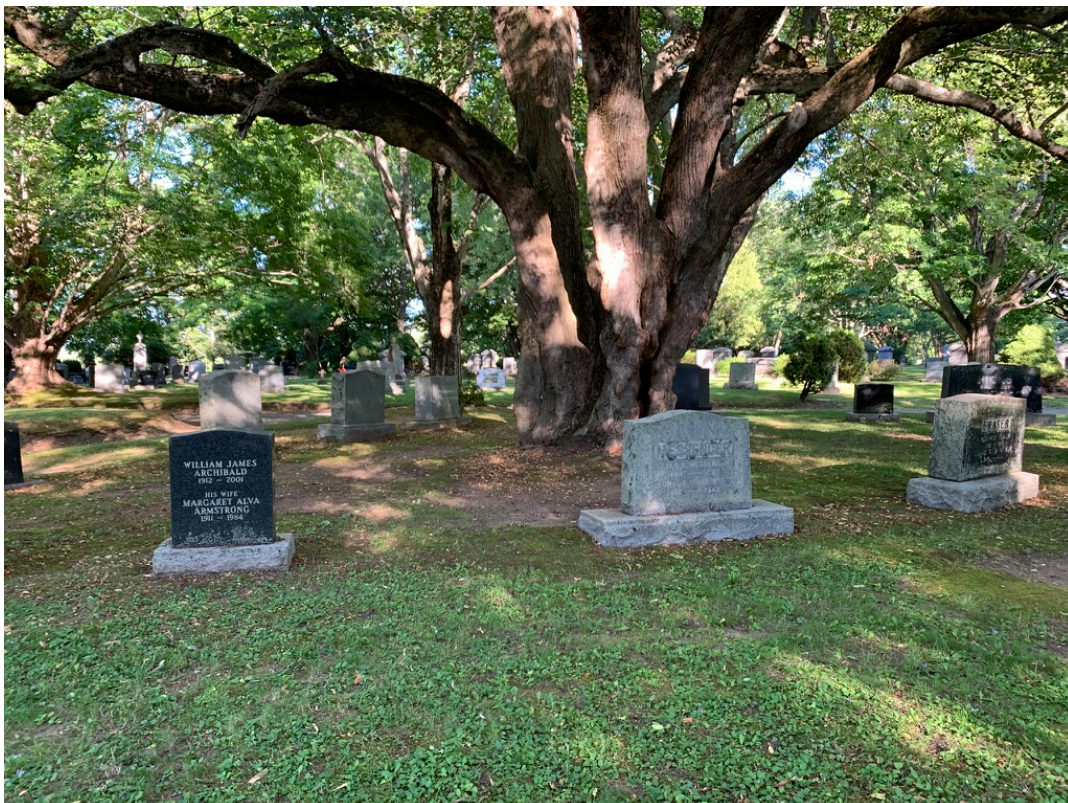
And the bridge has a history they're proud of, as evidenced by one of the historical postings around town.



This was an interesting piece of their history. Not sure I would've wanted to see this.



Even the cemetery was beautiful and welcoming!



Our neighbours back at The Ovens, who told us about Bridgetown, spoke highly of the town as well as the RV Park. And they were right.



We got a lovely spot right by the river.



It was peaceful and beautiful. We stayed for a couple of days. And when we next return to Nova Scotia, we will include Bridgetown as one of the places we want to return to.



We also got advice from someone we met at the Annapolis Royal market about a restaurant in Bridgetown. It was called Junction 16, and it was walking distance from our Bridgetown campground.



Junction 16 was the name of the train station that used to occupy this space.



In recognition of its history, they'd kept the old sign from the station.



Our waiter was wonderful, and he prepared us an excellent Aperol Spritz (one of our first on this trip!)



We had a delicious prosciutto and melon appetizer (which was quite elegant, as Jim points out) and we shared a very good pizza.



So, when our waiter gave us some advice about our next day's travel, we trusted him. We told him we were taking the Shore Road to Victoria Beach, and he recommended a fantastic hike we could stop and enjoy along the way, with a beautiful waterfall.

The signs pointed us in the right direction, and the GPS confirmed that the road we were taking would get us to our destination.



It wasn't the most picturesque drive, and frankly we weren't sure we were up for a "fantastic" hike. But we figured it was on the way to where we wanted to go, so we'd at least stop and check it out.



So, we continued on the Shore Road toward the Delaps Cove Wilderness Trail.



But the road started getting a little rough.



And then the pavement ended...



And it got narrower.



We finally got to the trail our waiter had told us about, and despite the promise of a great waterfall, it seemed way more ambitious than we were feeling at that point.



And to make matters worse, the "Shore Road" that the GPS told us would take us to our destination became nothing more than a path.

We were definitely not going to drive Charles down that!

So, we turned around, retraced our steps and found a different route to our camping spot for the night.

Which, as Jim points out, was right near a lighthouse.



And it was in a pretty quiet location.



Right by the water.



And we got to watch the Digby Ferry go by. Which is the closest we've ever been to the Digby Ferry.



So, it all worked out. But we decided that while it was a good idea to take advice from waiters about food and drinks, maybe not so wise to get advice about directions and hikes.

And generally, when neighbourly advice comes from a fellow RVer, it's worth listening to.

During our travels we had noticed that after taking a shower in Charles, there was water leaking outside the shower. Getting service on an RV while you're travelling is very difficult. When you call most places, they tell you the first slot they have is weeks away, or even months.

So, when we discovered the shower leak, I remembered something our neighbours at The Ovens Natural Park said to me.

This is them.



We never exchanged names. But before they left, they said they had some problems with their trailer, so, "Time to call Jerry's RV!"

So, when we had our shower problem, I suggested we look up Jerry's RV. Jim found it and called. At first, they said their first appointment was in five weeks. But when Jim told them we were travelling, they asked when we were going to be in their area. Jim told him, and a few days later, they called back and said they would squeeze us in.

So, we drove to the area (which was near where we were headed anyway) and we parked in their lot overnight, making sure we were there whenever they were ready for us. True to their word, one of their people knocked on our door a few hours later, and did his best to find the problem and repair the leak. The salesperson said they try to squeeze in travellers, because they know we can't just go home and wait till it's fixed. So, we are forever grateful to Jerry's. And to the couple who didn't even know they were giving us neighbourly advice! (Also, as a way of paying it forward, we posted on our RV group site that Jerry's RV was great and helpful to travellers.,)



Right from the start, when we first got Charles, we discovered the value of neighbourly advice. Within days after picking Charles up 4 years ago, we stopped in to visit Dan Reid, the son of friends Cathy & Jim Reid.



Dan had his own retrofitted RV, and he advised us to get an app called iOverlander, which shows you on a map where there are things helpful to campers, including water, propane, dump sites, campgrounds and most importantly, places where campers can park legally for free.

That was the best advice we ever got. Not only has it saved us literally thousands of dollars, but even more importantly, it's guided us to the most extraordinarily beautiful free camping spots all across the continent. And as another pay-it-forward act, we have passed iOverlander on to many other RVers that we've met on the road.

One of the incredible spots we found on this trip was Houston's Beach, on the Minas Basin in Nova Scotia.

This is where the ebb and flow of the Bay of Fundy tides are the most extreme, and we had front row seats on this amazing phenomenon.



In this photo, it looks like a normal beach with the water a normal distance away.



But 4 hours earlier, it looked like this:



I watched a couple of people walk out toward the water. They walked for a very long time, until I literally couldn't see them anymore.

I took this photo of clumps of grass by what looked like a little stream...



A few hours after, all of this was totally submerged. And I realized the grass was actually seaweed.



It was fascinating seeing how the beach changed from an endless expanse of mucky sand...



... to a great swimming spot.



It also had some other surprises. Charles met some new friends on the beach.



We had to convince Charles it wasn't a good idea to follow his friends.



It was a stunningly beautiful day. And as the sun sank, we even got an impressive sky.



All this because we took Dan Reid's advice and got the iOverlander app. Thanks Dan!

This last event isn't a result of advice from a neighbour. It was a stated desire from Jim that we go to one more place of significance in Nova Scotia: The Tidal Bore, near Truro.

I knew nothing of the Tidal Bore, so of course, I was willing to go see what it was all about.

We booked into the Truro KOA, which was about as close as we could get to the noted phenomenon.



Lucky us, we just happened to arrive in time for “Christmas in July”. A lot of campers (especially the ones with kids) really got into the “season”.





And when the big man arrived in his golf cart, there was plenty of ho-ho-hoing to go around.



But, of course, Christmas was not the reason we were in Truro. We were there to see the famous Tidal Bore.

So, we went to *the* place to view it.



Okay, please don't be embarrassed if you don't know what a Tidal Bore is. I didn't know either. So here you go, everything you need to know:

What is a tidal bore?

A tidal bore is a tumbling wavefront which moves upstream in a river, announcing the arrival of an incoming tide.

Tidal bores occur in regions of the world that have large tides. However, a tidal bore does not occur in every river flooded by a high tide.

Three conditions are necessary to form a tidal bore

- 1 Almost flat riverbed**
The riverbed must have a very gentle, downstream slope.
- 2 Higher riverbed**
The riverbed must be well above the level of the low tide so that the tide is rising rapidly when it enters the part of the river where a tidal bore might appear.
- 3 Shallow river water**
The water in the river prior to the arrival of the bore must be relatively shallow. If a tidal bore encounters water that is much deeper than the height of the bore, the bore collapses into a barely noticeable, smooth surge of rising water.

Why does the size of the tidal bore in the Salmon River vary?

The largest tidal bores in the Salmon River occur on the days of perigean-spring tides (*the Moon closest to Earth and at its new or full phase*). Occasionally, because of much rain and/or rapid snow melt, the river may be too deep for a tidal bore to form. This is most likely to happen if the tide is a minimal apogean-neap tide (*the Moon furthest from Earth and at its first- or last-quarter phase*).

Tidal Bore Times
A tidal bore occurs here twice daily. Predicted times are available at the **visitor centre** or online at **FundyDiscovery.ca**



Apparently, Truro is one of those spots that has ideal conditions for a Tidal Bore. And Jim was determined that we should see it on this trip.

So, we checked online to find out when the Tidal Bore would arrive in Truro. The listed time for that day was 5:37 pm.

We got there early to check the place out.



And we sat, at 5:37, ready to capture the moment on video.

It got pretty dramatic... when we looked up at the sky.



But as we stared at the river, 5:37 came and went. And even though we were told that the timing might not be totally accurate ... Jim was starting to wonder.



An hour after the tidal event was supposed to have happened ... still nothing.



So, we finally packed things up and went back to our campground. Feeling a little like the Santas who were somewhat ... deflated.



We have since discovered that we may have had the wrong information about the timing.

Either way, I have to say that despite Jim's enthusiasm for seeing this natural phenomenon, my summation is this:

The Tidal Bore is aptly named.

My advice would be to give it a pass.