

Trip 3 – Episode #5: To Plan or Not to Plan

I took this picture out the passenger window. I had just planned to capture a shot of typical New Brunswick landscape. It wasn't till I was looking for photos for this blog that I realized there was a deer in the right-hand side of the photo.



Sometimes we plan and it turns out. Sometimes it doesn't. Sometimes we benefit from *not* planning. Sometimes we plan and others change our plans for us. The next few days gave us examples of all those situations.

Before travelling through New Brunswick, I contacted an old family friend, Brock and his wife Krista. They live in Toronto, but they had a summer home in New Brunswick that Brock's parents had built years ago. I thought it would be fun to catch up with them, meet their son Noah, and see the house Brock's parents loved so much.

Brock responded that their plan was to arrive the day before we would be driving through, and they'd love to see us. I told him that we couldn't promise, but we'd try.

I also checked in with another friend, Tom, who was in the process of moving to New Brunswick. I had a general idea where his new home was and he had a general idea of when they and their furniture would be arriving. I said we didn't know where we were going to be, but if we happened to be nearby, we'd try to visit.

Meanwhile, our friend Esther told us about an article she read on the Fundy Trail. We'd never heard of it before, but since Esther had been such a reliable source during our US trip, we thought we'd be foolish not to plan to go there.

We also planned to visit Jim's friend Dean in Saint John.

So... here's what happened.

Along the way toward Saint John, we discovered that there was a ferry that could take us from Saint John to Digby.



And despite the fact that it would mean cancelling our visit with Brock and Krista, we decided that it might be more convenient to take the ferry instead of driving all the way to Nova Scotia's South Shore. So we told Brock we wouldn't be coming after all. 😊

We drove through Saint John, and arranged with Jim's friend Dean that we would meet for brunch before taking the ferry, on Sunday.



And we followed the lovely road to a campground we'd found that was right near the entrance of the Fundy Trail.







When we got to the campground, we discovered it was in the town of St. Martins...



... Which is where my friend Tom's new house is! Great planning, eh?

We visited Tom and his partner Judith at their new home, with the most stunning view of the Bay of Fundy, and we arrived before their furniture did!





Lucky folks!

The town, on Quaco Bay, was charming and full of interesting sights.









Not quite sure what to make of this.



Saturday was their annual yard sale, which was tempting but we managed to get away without buying anything.



We had a delicious dinner here, a recommendation by Tom (who also came and joined us for a drink).



Of course, the remarkable tides are always in evidence. At 10:15 in the morning, the boats were in drydock.



At 2:15 that afternoon...



And you can't help but wonder how long these houses will remain above sea level.



It's easy to see why the Sea Caves in St. Martins are a big draw.



Our campground was just fine and gave us a lovely view of the bay.



We got a couple of nice sunsets.



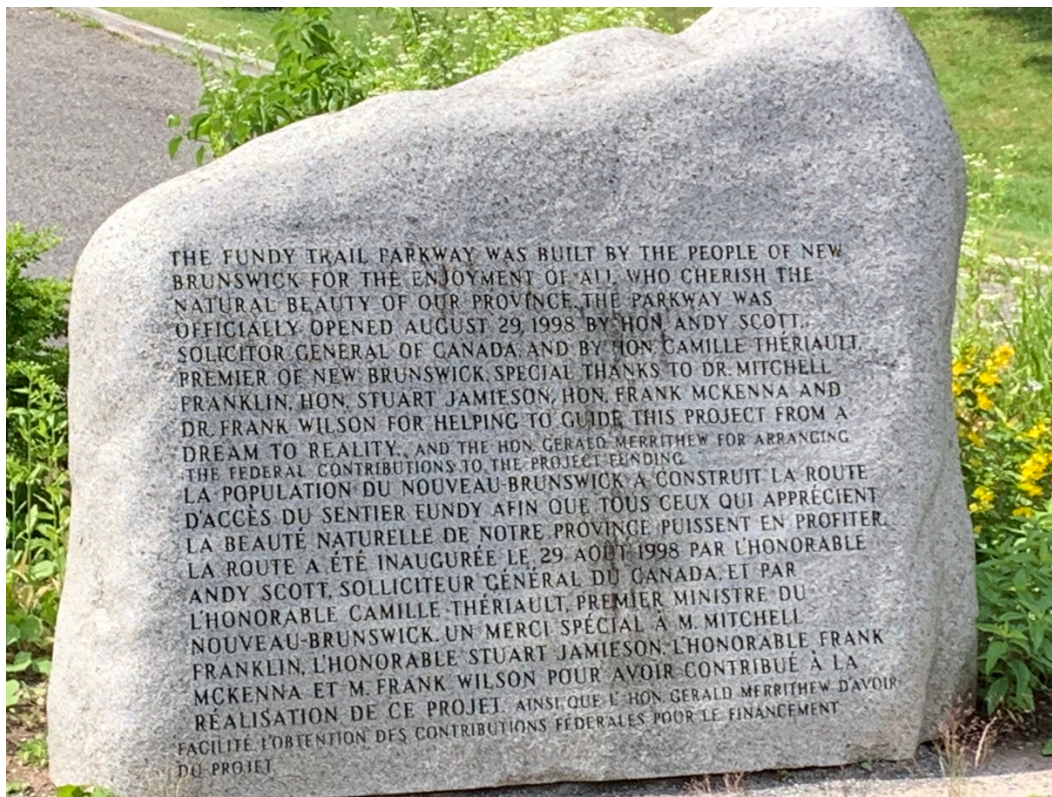




And to the great delight of the kids, a very surprising visitor (sans reindeer)!



But of course, the main reason we had come to this area was Esther's suggestion that we check out the Fundy Trail, which was established in 1998, but we'd never heard of it!



What a gorgeous drive, and so beautifully laid out. If we were more diligent hikers (and we definitely aren't), we would have really appreciated the beautifully groomed trails, the great signage and the facilities along the way. As it was, we enjoyed some pleasant walks, and we were amazed at how much we could see from the road, and from the many roadside lookouts.





Our only disappointment was that access to the one waterfall we were able to get to was closed off because the stairs were unsafe.



So this was the
best view we
could get of it.

But there was a
lot more to see,
and to be in awe
of.







We stopped at the elegant interpretive centre, and from there walked down to the Big Salmon River that empties into the bay.



Once again you could see the difference in the water levels when the tide comes in.



We continued on along the river to the suspension bridge that crosses it.





It was a little jiggly, but we both made it across and back.





And it seemed much safer than this, another stairway that needed repairs.



Fortunately, the stairs back up to the interpretive centre were in much better shape.



In the parking lot there, we got one of my favourite sights of the day – maybe the trip! There was a group of bikers we were sharing the road with. And if you look closely, the guy on the right is doing his partner's braid. That's love, eh?



We continued our drive, with more twists, turns, ups and downs.



You can see how much consideration was given to the travellers who might want to stop and picnic or just catch their breath.



We made it as far as Long Beach ... not the one on Jim's sweatshirt, which is actually from the farthest west coast, in Tofino.



Again, at this stop, they provided tables and sitting areas for travellers.



After another set of steep stairs, we decided it was time to turn around – although there was much more left of the Fundy Trail. We're so glad Esther suggested it! We're hoping we might try to get to the parts we missed on our way back home. At least we'll try to plan for it.

And speaking of plans ... Remember our plan to take the ferry after brunch with Jim's friend Dean? Well, on the Saturday, Jim got a call informing him that the ferry was cancelled because of a technical problem. (Nothing as serious as the PEI ferry which we fortunately were not on!)



So, on Sunday, we met up with Dean for a lovely lunch, and a visit to his beautiful home.



We saw a bit more of Saint John ...







And we contacted Brock and Krista and told them our plans had changed – again! They were very understanding. Brock even met us at the end of his long driveway to guide us in.



We had a lovely visit, got to know Noah a bit, and enjoyed finally seeing the great home Brock's parents had built.



Not exactly the way we planned, but it was all great!