

Trip 3 – Episode #13: The Viking Trail, Part 2

When we last left our intrepid travellers, they were resting after a brutal day of driving, sightseeing, wrestling a boiled lobster with their bare hands, and facing a very large Viking.

The next day proved equally “challenging”. We started off in search of more Vikings.

There was much evidence of them in the territory.



But to get the real story, we went to the Viking Interpretation Site, another UNESCO site, the first and only authenticated Norse site in North America. Until the discovery of a small cloak pin in 1968, by archaeologists Helge and Anne Stine Ingstad, stories about the Viking landings were just that - stories. The pin, and subsequent archaeological discoveries proved Leif Erickson and crews of Norse explorers had settled in Newfoundland and Labrador (or Vinland as they called it).

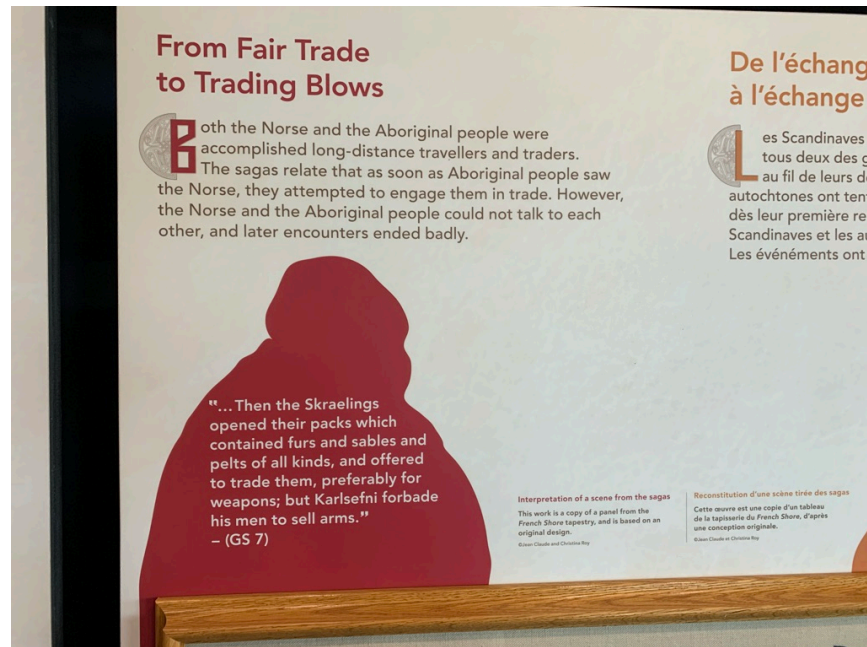


Inside, there are artifacts excavated from the site, evidence of the Vikings' time there, and insights into their way of life.



I always appreciate it when museums encourage you to touch things.

There was also information about their relationship with the indigenous people.



Overlooking the interpretation centre was a rocky mount, obviously a great lookout for the early settlers.



Jim helpfully pointed the way to the outdoor exhibit.



There's a great trail that leads you to a reconstructed replica of a Norse longhouse and other turf-built structures, meant to resurrect the life from about a thousand years ago.



Along the way, there were mounds and indentations which were the actual sites where they dug up evidence of the Vikings' settlement. Then they were covered again, to protect them, and the replica buildings were built.



In the reconstructed village of turf buildings, there are docents who dress as Vikings and explain and answer questions about the Viking life.







It was a little reminiscent of Hobbiton in New Zealand at times.



Also on the trail was a sculpture created to represent the “full circle” of mankind. This is the theory that when the Vikings landed from Europe, they completed the circle of human migration around the world, meeting up with the indigenous people who had originally migrated from the East.



After our rendezvous with the Vikings, we headed toward St. Anthony. And made an exciting sighting! As some of you may know, during our last cross-Canada adventure, we were on lookout for moose, and never saw a single one. But that day, finally...

There was actually a calf behind her, but I wasn't able to get her in the shot.

What a thrill – especially since they weren't staring at us on the highway!



Another pleasant drive with lots to look at – some charming, and some just puzzling.



Then we arrived in St. Anthony. We saw souvenirs that had “SNANTNEE” on them, and discovered that this is how residents pronounce the town name.

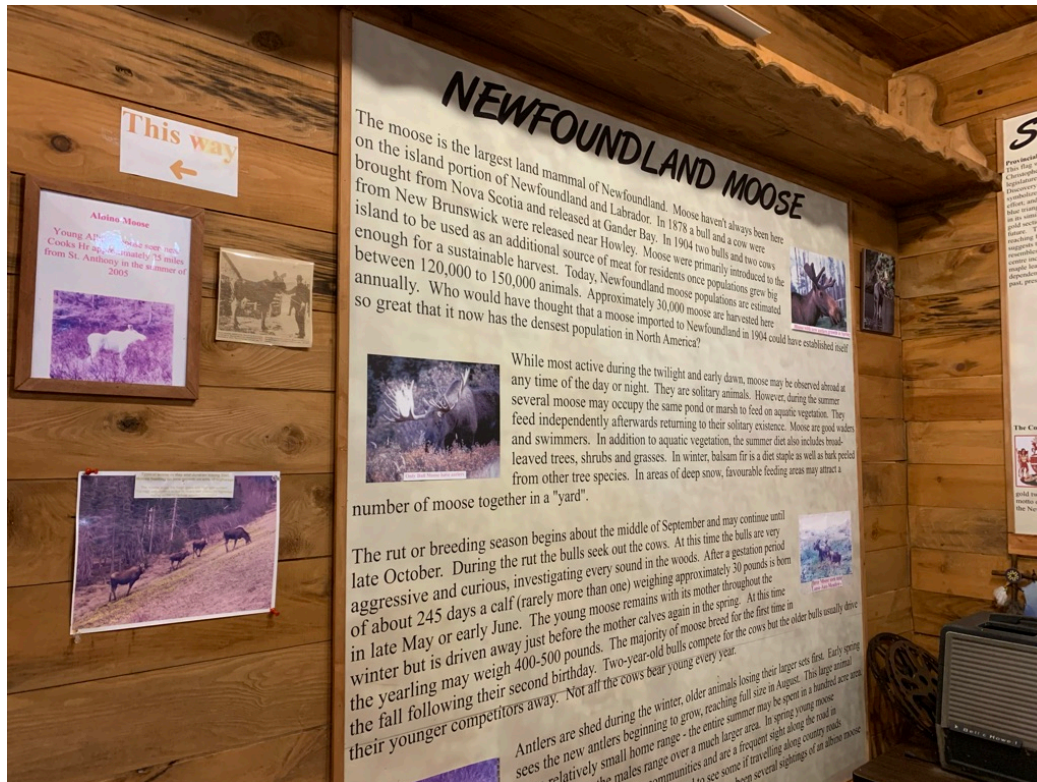


The main destination was the lighthouse. Which had typical Atlantic Canada colour.



And there was a little museum about the area next door.





And between the two, there was a typically Newfoundland vista.



Which we appreciated. But then we noticed something just below us, near the rocks.



Three humpback whales fishing. It was quite thrilling, and although the pictures don't nearly do it justice, I was happy to have caught this:



Jim managed to get some video (posted below) which gives a much better idea of the sense of excitement we felt, being so close to these magnificent mammals.

So in one day, we saw Vikings, two moose and three whales. Not a bad day's intrepidness!

We went back to our RV camp, specially reserved for Vikings.



We enjoyed a decent fish & chips dinner prepared by the park owner. And watched another pretty decent sunset as we prepared for the next intrepid leg of our journey.

