Trip 4 – Episode #2: Visiting the Home of Tom and Huck

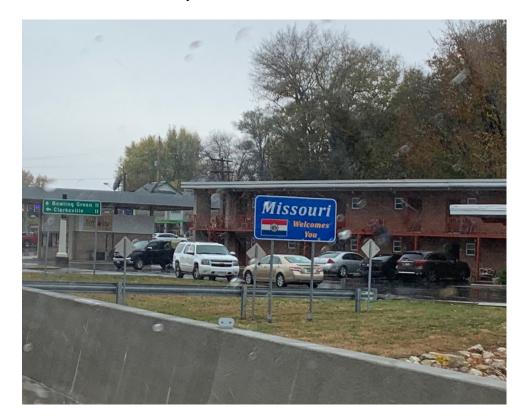
After leaving Lincoln's hometown of Springfield, Illinois, we realized there was another iconic hometown just a couple of hours away. And we couldn't resist.

So, we pointed Charles west, admiring some of the homes, buildings and fall colours along the way.





And then, we were offered a rainy welcome to Missouri.



Of course, if we were in Missouri, we couldn't be far from the mighty Mississippi. And we found a lovely spot to enjoy the view while we ate our lunch.



We've seen a lot of towns acknowledge a local hero, but I don't think we've ever visited a place that was so devoted to its most famous citizen. From the moment you enter Hannibal, Missouri, it's Mark Twain wherever you look.



















A lot of it is in fun, but when you actually go into the homes that have been converted into museums dedicated to Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens), you find rooms and rooms full of meticulous detail about his life and works.





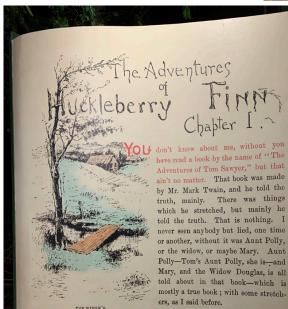






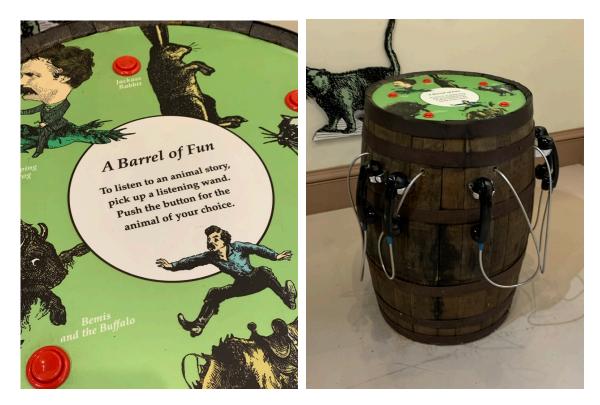
It's difficult to read the text in this display, but it essentially says that, as a child, Twain grew up in a world where slavery was accepted as the norm. But when he had the opportunity to play and get to know Negro kids, and listen to stories told by a man named Uncle Dan'l, he felt differently. Uncle Dan'l is believed to be the inspiration for the character of Jim in Huck Finn.





The WIDOW'S. Why the way that the book winds up, is this: Tom and me found the money that the robbers hid in the cave, and it made us rich. We got six thousand dollars apiece—all gold. It was an awfal sight of money when it was piled up. Well, Judge Thatcher, he took it and put it out at interest, and it fetched us a dollar a day apiece, all the year round—more than a body could tell what to do with. The Widow Douglas, she took me for her son, and allowed she would sivilize me ; but it was rough living in the house all the time, considering how dismal regular and decent the widow was in all her ways ; and so when I couldn't stand it no longer, I lit out. I got into my old rags, and my sugar-hogshead again, and was free and satisfied. But a standard standar Along with these recreations of the home and his times, there were opportunities to listen and enjoy Twain's stories.





Of course, the riverboats played an important part in Twain's life - and his pseudonym.





There's a great exhibit of the artwork done by Norman Rockwell for Huck Finn, along with quotes from him about how honoured he felt to do this work, and how dedicated he was to capturing the characters and the events the way Twain wrote them.





In another Hannibal home, they tell some of the stories of Twain's life as a child, and the young friends who inspired his characters. This whole exhibit is aimed at young visitors, and encourages them to imagine what life was like in those days, including whether or not you would survive to adulthood.



SAM CLEMENS' FIRST DAY IN SCHOOL



My school days began when I was four years and a half old... There were no public schools in Missouri in those early days, but there were two private schools in Hannibal — terms twenty-five cents per week per pupil, and collect it if you can... I was sent to Mrs. Horr's school, and I remember my first day in that little log house with perfect clearness, after these sixty – five years and upwards, at least I remember an

and upwards; at least I remember an episode of that first day. I broke one of the rules, and was warned not to do it again, and was told that the penalty for a second breach was a whipping. I presently broke the rule again, and Mrs. Horr told me to go out and find a switch and fetch it. I was glad she appointed me, for I believed I could select a switch suitable for the occasion with more judiciousness than anybody else. In the mult found a cooper's shaving of the old-time pattern—oak, two inches broad, a quarter of an inch thick, and rising in a shallow curve at one end....I carried it to Mrs. Horr, presented it, and stood before her in an attitude of meckness and resignation which seemed to me to win favor and sympathy; but it did not happen. She divided a long look of disapprobation equally between me and the rotten shaving; then she called me by my entire name, Samuel Langhorne Clemens—probably the first time I had even hered it all strung together in one procession—and said she was ashamed of me. I was to learn later, that when a teacher calls a boy by his entire name it means trouble. She said she would try and appoint a boy with better judgement than mine in the matter of switches... Jim Dunlap got it, and when he returned with the switch of his choice I recognized that he was an expert.





A MOTHER'S FEARS

Fear and grief were silent specters in Jane Clemens' heart. Only four of her seven children reached their teen years, and one of the four, Henry, died in a steamboat accident at age 19. A modern thinker might speculate that since high child mortality rates were a part of daily life, people back then expected it, dealt with it, and moved on. Perhaps that was true for a few unfortunate souls, but it certainly wasn't the case Jane Clemens! Jane was determined to personally grapple with the specter of death, especially when it came to Sam, who was born prematurely and suffered from weakness early in life. As Sam would joke in later years, Jane would try anything to save her sickly boy.

ONE QUARTER OF THE CHILDREN BORN DIE BEFORE THEY ARE ONE YEAR OLD; ONE HALF DIE BEFORE THEY ARE TWENTY-ONE, AND NOT ONE QUARTER REACH THE AGE OF FORTY.

HANNIBAL GAZETTE JUNE 3, 1847 As we walked through town, we saw evidence that there were other interesting aspects of life in town, and natives of Hannibal who had also made their mark.









But none like Mark Twain. We were so glad we had the chance to stop in Hannibal and discover more about this remarkable, witty, principled man.