

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.









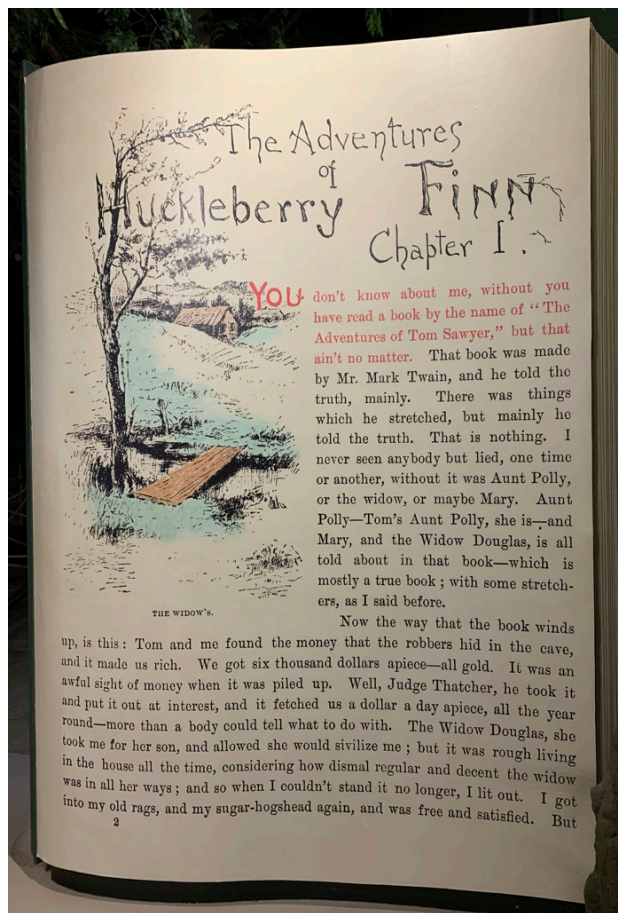


A lot of it is in fun, but when you actually go into the homes that have been converted into museums dedicated to Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens), you find rooms and rooms full of meticulous detail about his life and works.

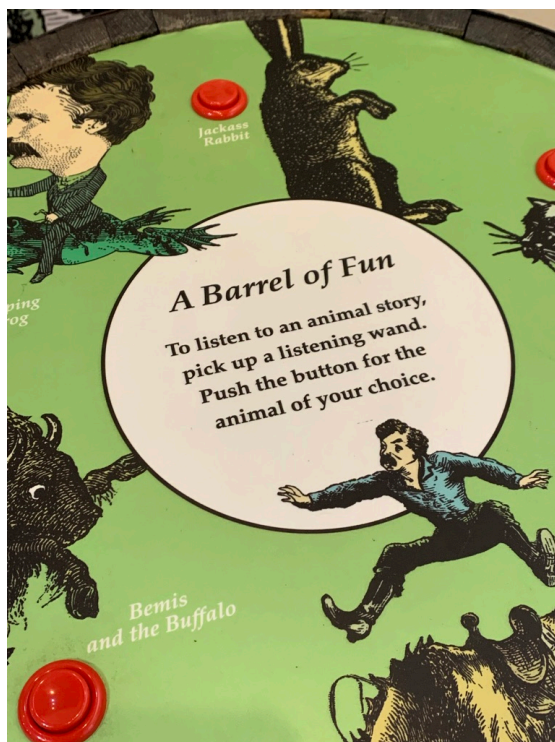




It's difficult to read the text in this display, but it essentially says that, as a child, Twain grew up in a world where slavery was accepted as the norm. But when he had the opportunity to play and get to know Negro kids, and listen to stories told by a man named Uncle Dan'l, he felt differently. Uncle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



Along with these recreations of the home and his times, there were opportunities to listen and enjoy Twain's stories.



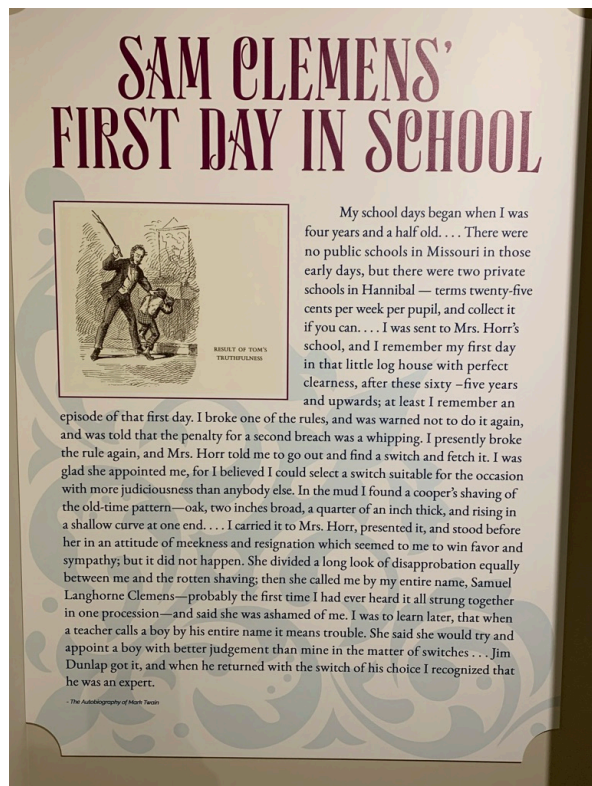
Of course, the riverboats played an important part in Twain's life - and his pseudonym.

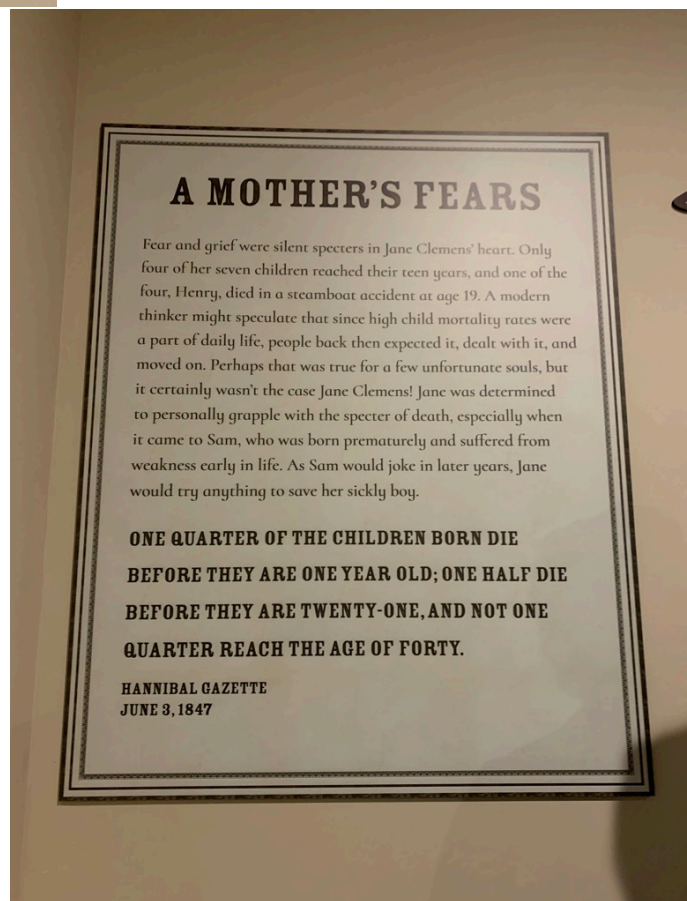


There's a great exhibit of the artwork done by Norman Rockwell for Huck Finn, along with quotes from him about how honoured he felt to do this work, and how dedicated he was to capturing the characters and the events the way Twain wrote them.



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.





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.