

RANDOM REFLECTIONS: Loved “The Rock!”

By Kathryn Wishlow

I have been back from the Newfoundland adventure with my close family for a couple of weeks now. This has given me some time to reflect back on the highlights so I can share them with my readers. Although I have only been to “the rock” as they call it, twice ... it is not enough.

For those of you who may never be able to travel there, I am sorry. You will miss a truly awe inspiring island of tremendous beauty. Admittedly, this visit my daughter arranged for us all to take a boat tour from Bulls Bay out to Gull Island, and it was the best. (Last time I was there in June, the tours had not begun.) You HAVE to see that area from the water to appreciate the spectacular, rocky cliffs.

As a hobby geologist, I could spout terminology that would impress the experts. But, as a tourist, I can only tell you that the combination of a perfectly warm, sunny, calm day ... plus an entertaining tour guide ... made that two hour boat ride epic. Each inlet and bay had examples of ancient shifts in the topography, with rocks of many layers and colours. It brought tears to my eyes ... to put it simply.

Our guide pointed out a peculiar sight. I had never seen a humongous “sunfish” before. It looked like a flat, beige mushroom

spread out about a foot from the water's surface, sunning itself. The very blue waters made their sandy appearance easy to spot as the boat slowed down nearby. I declined “kissing a cod,” but the whole time we were there, I certainly took every opportunity to eat it!

Puffins were my favourite bird as a child. I had read articles about them and seen many photos, but actually seeing their awkward flight on wings too small for their tubby bodies was fascinating. Their colourful beaks look painted and phoney, and they kind of waddled on big feet like little penguins. My granddaughter had her nose pressed to the glass squealing, “Puffins ... birdies ... puffins!” every time she spotted one. I shared her delight!

A Sunday afternoon trip to “The Rooms” ate up five hours from open to close. That modern museum /art gallery was very well set up. Each of the four floors was half museum exhibits all about the history, geology, archaeology, and wildlife of Newfoundland. The other half was local artisans displaying their films, talents and crafts. Many of the displays were interactive and encouraged visitor participation. Maybe not interesting for everyone, but we really liked that.

I did not know that Bell Island was the only Canadian place that had been attacked by the Germans because they were supplying rich iron ore to the allies. I believe I read that at least eight hundred Newfoundlander troops had perished in twenty four hours in Sommes, France. I also read a newspaper article about an upcoming election from over one hundred years ago. People then wanted ALL of the same things we demand these days. Some things never change!

Our family enjoyed the stoney beach at Logy Bay just below our rented house on the cliff. Because we were nearing off-season, we had a lot of quality alone time there until an hour before sunset, when a few locals wandered down to watch the sun sink into the sea. The peacefulness permeated the bay ... everyone was smiling ... the calm, friendliness was very contagious. Looking back, there is no doubt in my mind that I truly “Love the Rock” despite not even being “screched in!”

(Kathryn Wishlow belongs to White pine Writers Inc., a local group of like-minded authors who encourage all facets of writing and publishing literary efforts. Follow them on Facebook or www.whitepnewriters.ca)