

Day 2- Hockey, Wine and Cheese -July 6th 2012



View towards the harbor from the 5th floor of our hotel showed morning of overcast weather and a bit of rain. At 7:00 in the morning we headed to the breakfast room for a meal. The continental breakfast although not hot had on the buffet smoked atlantic salmon – lots of it. The continental

buffet included tea, coffee, juices and sparkling water and a vast array of fruits, cereal, toppings, yogurt and meat.

We left Halifax or at least our familiar area of the community, which according to Bob, who would never tell a lie, by area, is the largest community in Canada. As we headed towards the Dill Farm we drove through a somewhat private establishment known as Kings-Edgehill. It was a beautiful estate perfectly manicured.



Bob say's that if the gate is open and there is no signage to say no trespassing then lets go in and explore or leave if someone asks. So lets go in like we own the place because who knows – with some rich relative – maybe we do.

The Dill Farm is not a dill farm but is famous for two obscure reasons. The first is it is the Land of the Giant Pumpkins. The Dill Farm is home of the World's Largest Pumpkin Variety, "Dill's Atlantic Giant". Developed by the late Howard Dill of Windsor, NS and former 4 time World Champion Pumpkin Grower. Howard Dill known as "The Pumpkin King", developed and patented "Dill's Atlantic Giant". Seed which has produced specimens weighing over 1600 lbs.



Each pumpkin plant has its own specific plot where usually only one pumpkin is raised per plant from the male and female flower. The pumpkins in many cases are custom grown for clients to be used various events such as carved out pumpkin boat races. Others are for Jack-o'-lanterns or other events.

Female Flower



Male Flower



The Dill Farm is also famous for Long Pond the oft debated Birthplace of Hockey.



Copied from CBC's Hockey Day in Canada 2002 broadcast and photos January 5th, both Don Cherry and Ron MacLean were said to have “whooped it up”.



Frogs were croaking with their mating rituals in guttural vocals - if you listened closely in no way they resembled the sounds of skates cutting into ice, grunts of exertion and the smack of a frozen horse turd hitting a real wood stick. If only the ghosts of time could talk and let me in on a quick game of shinny. The cradle of hockey field of dreams found behind an acreage of squash, does not sound much like a movie.

For decades, the figure of a man has been seen – in all types of weather – waving and welcoming travelers into the Hantsport area from the Bog Road overpass. Freddie Wilson has greeted those traveling back and forth from the Annapolis Valley for significant periods of nearly every day of the last 38 years. His friendly gestures are noticed by people throughout the country. In 2007, many supporters of Wilson rallied together on-line with the hope of sharing stories and giving something back to him. With the twining of Highway 101, the idea – to commemorate Wilson by renaming the overpass – was generated. By Christy Marsters – The Hants Journal



Grand-Pré (Wikipedia) was founded by Acadian settlers who traveled east from Champlain's original settlement in Port-Royal Annapolis Royal in 1680. The settlement grew and developed great expanses of tidal marsh as productive farmland.

During the French and Indian War, the Acadians were expelled from Grand Pré during the Bay of Fundy Campaign (1755). There were various British soldiers who kept a journal of the deportation from Grand Pré such as Jeremiah Bancroft. The site of Grand Pre during the expulsion was later immortalized by American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow with his epic poem Evangeline.

Acadians from Grand Pré were dispersed in many locations and some eventually returned to other parts of the Canadian Maritimes such as Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and New Brunswick. Many Acadians expelled from the Grand Pré area eventually settled in the New England States and in South Louisiana in the United States. In Louisiana, the term Cajun evolved from the name Acadian.

After the deportation of the Acadians, the vacant lands were resettled by New England Planters in 1760 and renamed Horton. A large town site was laid out at Grand Pre but merchants and shop owners congregated at nearby Wolfville instead, leaving Grand Pre to continue as a farming community. One of the Planter descendants was Sir Robert Laird Borden, the eighth Prime Minister of Canada, who was born in Grand-Pré in 1854. Grand Pre has continued as a rich and productive small farming community.



Grande Pre Interpretive Center



Replica of the Acadian Grande Pre Church



Deportation Cross and the Planters Memorial





We stopped in at the Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-op (Wikipedia) for a cuppa. The Canadian importer of fair trade coffee, tea, sugar, and chocolate is based in Grand Pre. Just Us! products are sold throughout Canada, typically in shops specializing in fair trade goods. The coffee was excellent but the chocolate samples were to die for.



The Annapolis Valley is a valley and region formed by a trough between two parallel mountain ranges along the shore of the Bay of Fundy. The Valley as a fertile region, composed of Annapolis County, Kings County, and Hants County. The Acadians claimed the tidal flats with french dikes to produce crops on the fertile land.

Canning Look Off



Annapolis Valley



Muir Murray Estate Winery is set in a picturesque 20 acre vineyard just outside of Wolfville. To assist in selection of the various wines, free samples are available. We purchased an Atlantic Shore White and an Eagles Sore Red. We enjoyed a sip of each that evening.



Our next stop was at the Port a Gastro Pub and Bistro for soup and a sandwich.



After our afternoon meal we continued in and around the Annapolis Valley to the Fox Hill Cheesehouse. I know and you are exactly right, a good glass of wine deserves to be paired with a great piece of cheese. It was difficult to select from all the samples we tasted – the house custom packaged sampler packs on the spot. All of the cheese is made at the facility from locally produced dairy.



Going back to Halifax we were treated with more of the breathtaking scenery.



Farming in the Valley



Gypsum Cliffs

We finished the day with a cocktail at Cheers – a short walk - and a light supper because we knew that our dessert of Nova Scotia wine and cheese was waiting for us in our hotel room. Hint to self – Next time beg, borrow or obtain a knife to cut the cheese.

