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# RV Lifestyle

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## EXPLORING NEWFOUNDLAND

IN A ROADTREK  
CLASS B



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Vol. 33 No. 1



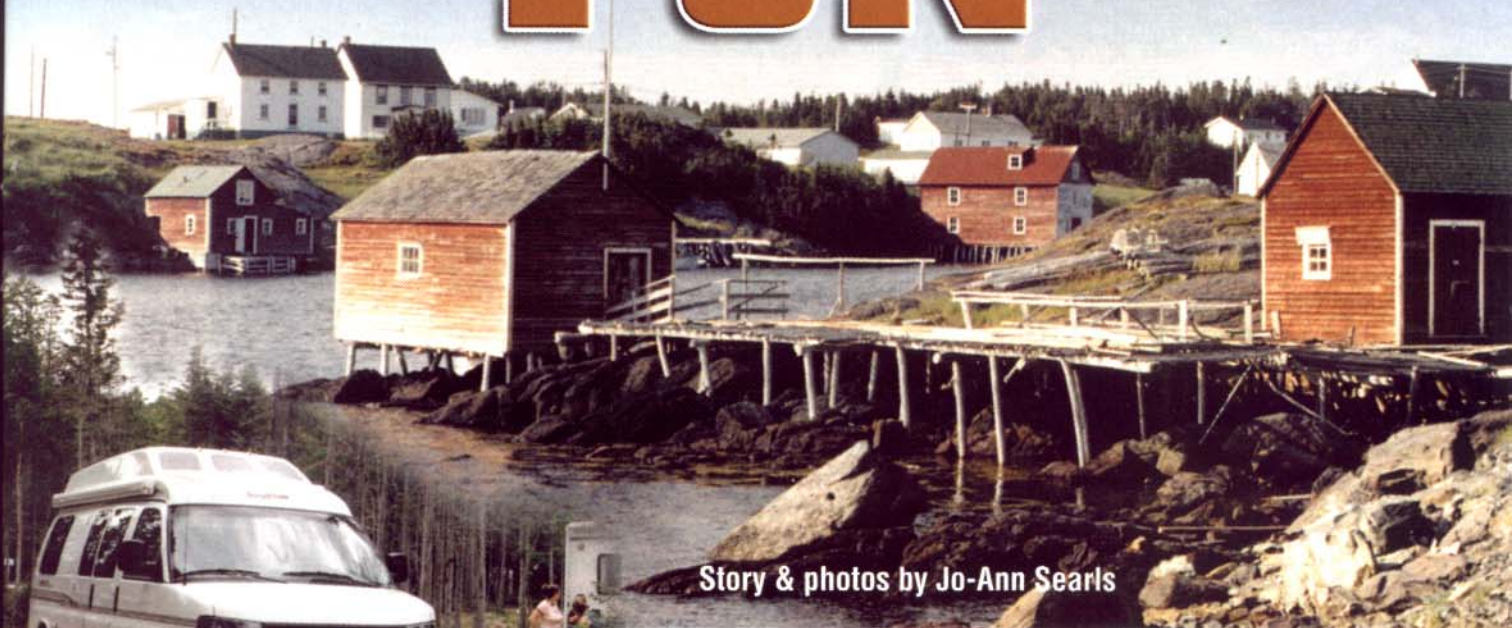
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# No Wonder They Call It New-FUN-Land



Story & photos by Jo-Ann Searls

*With its stunning views,  
enchanting history and legendary  
hospitality, no wonder Newfoundland  
is the favourite destination for a growing number of RVers*

**D**riving up the Trans Canada Highway in Newfoundland on our way to the Grand Codroy Valley RV Resort, we were happy to be back on the road again after six hours on the Marine Atlantic ferry.

I had come to Newfoundland to resume an Atlantic holiday that began the summer before. Running out of time after touring Nova Scotia, PEI and New Brunswick, I vowed to return at the first opportunity so that I could experience what some fellow RVers I had met described as their favourite province of all.

Newfoundland is the 17th largest island in the world. With a landmass of more than 406,628 square kilometers, it is larger than the three Maritime Provinces I had visited the summer before. Sharon Locky, a fellow Calgarian whom I have known since the fourth grade, and I set out to explore the Rock in Roadtrek's nimble 190 Popular Class B van, which



*Main: The traditional Newfoundland lifestyle survives on the Change Islands. Inset: Prince Edward's RV Park in Corner Brook sits on a huge parcel of land overlooking the salmon-rich Humber River. Above: John Smees of Stone's RV in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, walks Jo-Ann and Sharon through the features of the Roadtrek 190 Popular.*

was generously provided for the trip by Home and Park Motorhomes in Kitchener, Ontario, with the assistance of Stone's RV in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, a prominent Roadtrek dealer locat-

ed just outside of Halifax.

Our first stop was the North Sydney ferry dock, to cross from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland. Marine Atlantic charged \$375 round trip for two passengers and our Roadtrek for the six-hour crossing. Because the ferry departs first-thing in the morning, we overnighted at the family-owned and operated Arm of Gold Campground, conveniently located near the ferry dock.

After landing in Newfoundland the next morning at Port aux Basque, we slowly made our way along the Trans Canada. Concerned about the fog and the decreasing visibility, I called the Codroy Valley RV Park on my cell phone. Codroy Valley's Alice Keeping informed me that the weather would change once I rounded the bend at Wreckpoint, and she was right. The weather cleared almost instantly, and we easily found our way to the pretty RV park nestled beside of the Grand Codroy River.

With the towering peaks of the



Anguille Mountains and Long Range Mountains on either side of it, the Grand Codroy Valley RV Park is situated close to so many attractions that one could easily spend a week there. We spent two days, and enjoyed every moment of our stay. The following morning, refreshed after a good night's sleep, we toured the town of Rose Blanche and its historic lighthouse. The road in town is challenging, with steep and narrow hills. The Roadtrek took it in stride, but I felt it would have been a tight squeeze in a large RV.

The oldest stone lighthouse in North America, the Rose Blanche light was built in 1856. Recently restored, the view from the top is simply breathtaking. The village of Rose Blanche itself proved to be one of the most colourful hamlets that Sharon and I had ever seen, becoming the benchmark for the balance of our Newfoundland vacation.

The Grand Codroy Wildlife Museum – home of the largest stuffed moose in Newfoundland – provided another highlight. After our visit, we found we were able to identify many species of wildlife that we came to see along the highway. By now well-rested, day three found us travelling 173 kilometres north to Corner Brook, the hub of the province. We were guests of the Kinsmen's Prince Edward RV Park, located just outside of Newfoundland's second largest city at the mouth of the Humber River, just 30 miles from the Gulf of the St. Lawrence and the entrance to the Bay of Islands.

The influence of explorer Captain James Cook could be seen everywhere in this region. A thriving city, Corner Brook proved the ideal spot to stock up on groceries and supplies. Of course, we also paid a visit to the local Tim Horton's franchise – an essential for Canadian travellers.

Prince Edward's RV Park sits on a huge parcel of land overlooking the salmon-rich Humber River. Visit nearby Lark Harbour and you can enjoy magnificent views of the Blow Me Down moun-

tain range. You may even get a chance to glimpse one of Canada's newest submarines patrolling the Humber Arm.

At Lark Harbour, Bottleneck Cove is quintessential Newfoundland. The view here is simply astounding, with towering green mountains plummeting into the deep cobalt sea. Just down the road, at Little Port, fishermen sell their daily catches to the fish processing plants. What better place to order our fresh lobsters, mussels and calamari for our Newfie broil later that night? Our hosts at Kinsmen's were kind enough to share their Coleman stove and big pot of lobster, along with a deep fryer for the calamari.

Travelling onto St. Anthony's the next day, some 468 kilometres from Corner Brook, we arrived at Gros Morne National Park and the stretch of highway known as the Viking Trail. Stopping for lunch at a most unusual and beautiful series of rock arches right on the land wash, appropriately named The Arches, we took in the stunning ocean view. The arches themselves are massive, but quite low to the water at high tide. Smoothed by the waves into a graceful structure that no architect could imitate, head-sized peb-



bles of every stripe and colour were constantly washed by the surf. Travelling onto Port aux Choix, located 20 minutes off the Viking Trail, a national historic site commemorates some of Canada's most significant aboriginal history. No less than four prehistoric cultures have been uncovered at Port au Choix.

The influence of Dr. Wilfred Thomason Grenfell is found throughout Newfoundland, but perhaps nowhere as



much as in St. Anthony. Born in England in 1865, Dr. Grenfell transformed a budding medical career into a legendary mission when he arrived in Newfoundland to investigate conditions in the Labrador fishery. He stayed a lifetime, practicing medicine, building hospitals and establishing schools and orphanages. Grenfell once travelled more than 1,500 miles across treacherous ice and through blinding snow – by dogsled, no less – to provide medical services throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. In 1928, he was made a Knight Commander of St. Michaels and St. George in recognition of a lifetime of commitment to his beloved coast.

Continuing on the Viking Trail, we passed St. Barbe, where the terminal for the ferry to Blanc Sablon in Labrador is located. Our luck was with us that day, as the sky was so clear we could see Labrador in the distance. We didn't have time on this trip to make the crossing, so I made a mental note to explore it at the next opportunity.

Route 430 affords numerous magnificent views of Gulf of the St. Lawrence and the Strait of Belle Isle. At Eddies Cove, we travelled east again, reaching the village of St. Anthony's before nightfall. That's when we made a pact to avoid travel after dark again. There are thousands of moose along Newfoundland's

## NEW-FUN-LAND

1. The Viking Trail affords many great places to stop for lunch, including the Arches – a series of massive stone arcs that provide a dramatic seascape. 2. Boat tours take visitors on dramatic tours of Western Brook Pond. 3. Jo-Ann and Sharon enjoyed fjord-like panoramas on their boat tour of Western Brook Pond. 4. Colorful lupins are a Maritime icon. 5. The site of the first European settlement in North America, L'Anse aux Meadows ranks among the world's most significant archaeological properties and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



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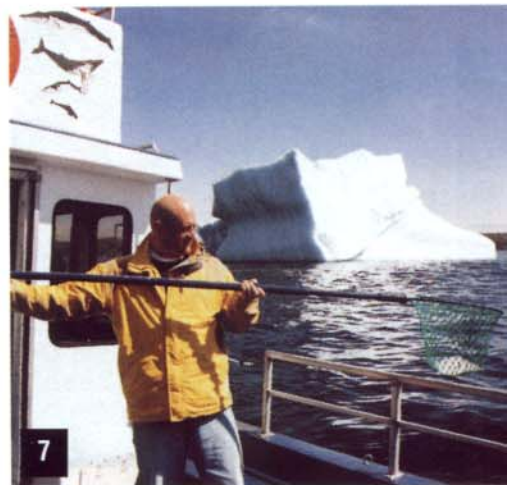
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highways, and residents were constantly warning tourists like us to be alert. We were also advised to keep the gas tank topped up, for in Newfoundland there is not a gas station at every turn in the road. It is sometimes 100 kilometres or more between pumps, so you fill up at

every opportunity.

Our home away from home in St. Anthony's was the Triple Falls RV Park, which had just gone through a major expansion, adding 28 new full service sites to its already impressive facilities and spotless amenities. We spent three days in St. Anthony's and wish we could have had more time there.

The site of the first European settlement in North America, L'Anse aux Meadows ranks among the world's most significant archaeological properties and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Nearly 1,000 years ago, a Norse expedi-



tion from Greenland under the leadership of Lief Ericson landed at L'Anse aux Meadows and established a camp that would serve as base for further explorations to the south. This Norse site was first brought to the world's attention in 1960, when the remains of eight 11th Century buildings were found. The outlines of these buildings can still be seen today. The view – wildflowers, the ocean and the numerous majestic icebergs which are seemingly always present off the coast – remains unchanged from what Ericson saw. The visitor centre at L'Anse aux Meadows houses original Viking artefacts found on site. Nearby, at Norstead, a live action interpretive center provides a glimpse into daily life in a Viking outpost.

St. Anthony itself is a treasure. Perhaps the largest northern town in Newfoundland, it houses the headquarters of the International Grenfell Association, a mission providing medical services throughout northern Newfoundland and Labrador. You can stroll the waterfront and the Dock House Museum, built in 1929, or take an unforgettable boat cruise



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## NEW-FUN-LAND

6. The appropriately-named *Photographer's Paradise*. 7. Icebergs drifting along the shores of Newfoundland might be 600 years old. Scooping up the chips allows visitors the chance to explore pieces of history that have existed since before the European settlement of North America. 8. One of numerous inspirational signs at Grand Codroy Valley RV Park. 9. The harbour at Rose Blanche. The first stone lighthouse in North America was built there in 1856. 10. Accessed via a 25-minute ferry ride, the scenic *Change Islands* have a rich fishing heritage that's still very much in evidence today.

to see icebergs up close and learn all about whales.

For the trek back to Gros Morne we chose route 432, which took us past the community of Main Brook. I was tempted to go on to Roddickton and Englee, and perhaps take the ferry over to remote Bell Island, but we had reservations the next day to take the Western Brook Pond boat cruise and would not have had time. That night we were the guests of Portland Creek's Mountain Water's RV Resort. The RV Resort is located on the Portland Creek Pond with magnificent views of

## ROADTREK 190 POPULAR

**J**o-Ann and Sharon toured Newfoundland in a Roadtrek 190 Popular Class B motorhome, by Home and Park.

The 190 Popular has been a leading seller for the Kitchener, Ontario-based manufacturer for many years, combining the nimble handling of a van with the comfort and full features of a fully loaded motorhome. The 2003 model Jo-Ann and Sharon enjoyed is based on a Chevy 3500 van chassis, and features numerous upgrades from previous models. Among the biggest changes are the integration of molded countertops and tables, leather upholstery, and an air conditioning/heating system that sits neatly recessed into the roof.

Powered by a 300 horsepower, 6.0 L Vortech V8 engine, the 190 Popular features standard four-wheel disc brakes, an internal transmission oil cooler, Class Four frame-mounted receiver hitch, aerodynamic running boards with storage, swiveling and reclining Captain's seats with power lumbar supports and dual armrests, a premium AM/FM/CD system, LT245/75R16E blackwall tires and a fuel capacity of 117 liters for extended cruising. Travelers are rewarded with the comfort of a 12,000 BTU air conditioner, a broad 30-inch wide aisle, plush 28 ounce carpeting, a 16,000 BTU furnace, 800-watt microwave with turntable and a large over-cab storage compartment. Popular options include a DVD entertainment system, Florida screen room, 15-inch flat screen TV, a second auxiliary battery and remote-start, 2.8 kW Onan generator.

When it's time to turn in, the rear dinette converts to a sumptuous king-size bed up to six feet, four inches long or into two comfy twin beds up to six four inches long with a night table between.

The kitchen is perhaps the 190 Popular's most impressive feature, with its molded fiberglass countertop with solid surfaces, so those inevitable scratches can be easily repaired. The large counter offers an extensive food preparation area, including an integral sink with a single lever-faucet, flush cover/cutting board, and a recessed stove also with a flush cover. Beautiful maple cabinetry with solid maple doors creates a bright and modern-looking interior.



*At the Juniper RV and Campground, overlooking Rocky Harbour, Jo-Ann and Sharon met up RV Lifestyle columnists M.B. and Karen Wilson, who arrived with a Wagon Trains caravan.*

A comfortable washroom features a shower and Thetford toilet. A removable floor cover reveals a drain trough that spans the lowered floor and prevents water from leaving the shower area.

Home & Park was founded in 1974 by Jac Hanemaayer, who had the company build a Class B motorhome that he designed because he thought Class A motorhomes at the time drove too much like buses. In 1980, Hanemaayer created the Roadtrek with its low-profile roof, lowered floor and three-section floor plan – design features that continue to distinguish the product today.

### SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Length:</b> .....	<b>20'5"</b>
<b>Height:</b> .....	<b>8'4"</b>
<b>Width:</b> .....	<b>6'7"</b>
<b>Wheelbase:</b> .....	<b>155"</b>
<b>GVWR:</b> .....	<b>9,600 lbs.</b>
<b>Sleeps:</b> .....	<b>2 - 3</b>
<b>Water Heater:</b> .....	<b>6 US gal.</b>
<b>LP:</b> .....	<b>10 US gal./45 lbs.</b>
<b>Storage Capacity:</b> ..	<b>.62 cu. ft.,</b>
	<b>80 w/options</b>
<b>Fresh Water:</b> .....	<b>95 L/</b>
	<b>25 US gal.</b>
<b>Holding Tank – Grey:</b> ...	<b>85 L/</b>
	<b>23 US gal.</b>
<b>Holding Tank – Black:</b> ..	<b>40 L/</b>
	<b>10 US gal.</b>
<b>MSRP:</b> .....	<b>\$ 74,100</b>
<b>Warranty:</b> ..	<b>3 year/60,000 km</b>

## NEW-FUN-LAND

Gros Pate, which soars 673 metres skyward. Salmon and trout fishing in this area is superb, with excellent moose and caribou hunting in season.

From there it is just a short 30-minute drive to the jewel of Gros Morne National Park – Western Brook Pond. Polar fleece clothing kept the chill away on the 45-minute hike to the landlocked pond. The trip along Western Brook is a lesson in geology. The Precambrian granite here ranks as some of the oldest in the province, and forms the Long Range Mountains. Rockslides are not uncommon, something we ponder as the skipper steers the vessel within centimetres of the rock face. As we approach the end of the fjord and come about for the return trip, our narrator points out a small dock. Intrepid travellers can disembark here to hike up and over the mountains, a four-day journey.

That evening Sharon and I were guests of Juniper RV and Campground, which overlooks Rocky Harbour. Proprietor John and wife, Greeta, are Rocky Harbour natives who run a scenic campground ideally located just up the hill from the main street in town. It turned out that RV Lifestyle columnists M.B. and Karen Wilson were also in camp that night, with their Wagon Trains caravan on the way back from Labrador. They invited us to their campfire that night, where they were toasting marshmallows.

From the Juniper Campground, Sharon and I decided to shift our vacation plans to include central Newfoundland and an opportunity to explore the Kittiwake Coast. Taking the 25-minute ferry over to Change Islands, we learned of the area's rich fishing heritage. Here we treated ourselves to two days at Beulah and Eddie Oakes' Bed and Breakfast Guest House. Known as Seven Oakes, it sits on a cliff overlooking the North Atlantic.

Just up the road from Seven Oakes, Sharon and I enjoyed yet another two hour boat tour through the Change Islands, where we saw numerous local points of interest and still more icebergs.

What you see on a trip to Newfoundland depends on when you go. When we were there in late June, the parade of icebergs drifting down the coast from Greenland was endless. We also saw a number of whales – fin, pilot, minke and humpbacks, hunting for food along the coast. Their preferred dinner is the capelin, a small smelt-like fish that swarms along the Newfoundland beaches each summer to spawn.

It took us seven hours from Change

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Islands to return to Grand Codroy Valley's RV Park, where we were warmly greeted upon our arrival for our last night on the island. The next day, it was back on the ferry to the mainland, and the realization that our vacation was quickly coming to an end.

We docked in North Sydney at 4:15 am and sleepily embarked from the ferry dock. Five minutes later, we were setting up camp at the Arm of Gold RV Resort on the banks of the Bras d'Or River. After some much-welcomed shut-eye, we returned our borrowed Roadtrek to John Smees at Stone's RV. As Sharon and I boarded the plane home, we wish we could have had another month to tour Newfoundland. We also marvelled at just how nice everyone we met during our vacation was. For an island called The Rock, it was a hard place to leave. 🍁

#### **FERRY INFO**

**For information on ferry schedules and fares, contact Marine Atlantic at 1-800-341-7981 or visit on the web at [www.marine-atlantic.ca](http://www.marine-atlantic.ca).**