

“A Roadtreking We Will Go!”
Lessons for Touring versus Long Stays

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I have been inspired to spend time at my keyboard documenting our Roadtrek experiences by FMCA On-the-Road RV Reporter Mike’s adventures with his wife Jennifer and their Norwegian Elkhound Tai - <http://www.fmca.com/openmike/>

Like Mike and Jennifer, my wife Jay and I are RV newbies having only undertaken four trips for a total of 80 days on the road during the past two summers (2011 and 2012). While I am not a journalist, like Mike, I am not a stranger to writing. As the Canadian Space Agency’s representative to the United States, based in Washington DC, for twenty-two years I wrote more reports than I care to think about! I have also authored a published book and numerous peer reviewed papers. Also, I find writing to be very therapeutic. My guess is that as a retired journalist Mike also cannot shed the writing bug!

We left Washington DC and returned to Canada (Ottawa) in August 2010 but our RV story started some five years before. We hope that like Mike’s experiences, ours may be useful for fellow RV’ers and Roadtrekers in particular.

Know What You Want

In the interests of full disclosure I should point out that we have been tent campers for many years but as we looked towards our retirement we began to realize that the Therm-a-Rest® mattresses would have to be replaced by something much thicker if we wanted pain free sleeping. Also, we figured we had earned the right to be off-the-ground during our retirement years! So, we got serious about our dream to own an RV.

We thought long and hard about the type of RV we wanted, and might be able to afford. As tenters by nature we wanted the ability to

drive on by-ways and in towns, camp just about anywhere, and we did not want to tow a car (or a Harley – though I fantasized about having one!). When tent camping we rather sympathized with those folks in their big rigs that as often as not had to park cheek-to-jowl while we were camped in seclusion. For these and other reasons a Type B campervan was our choice.

Now came the hard part. What did we want in the way of facilities in our campervan? #1 was an inside toilet – as 60+ year olds no need to explain why! Obviously we wanted the usual stuff like fridge, stove, sink etc. We did not want to have to climb over each other in the night, to use the “facility”, so a bed that was oriented long ways was important. Also, we envisaged long trips when we might want to go to the theatre in dressier clothes, so a wardrobe was on our list. We were not that fussy about being able to sleep more than the two of us as long as we could transport two to three more folks e.g. the grandkids who would sleep in tents. At the time we thought a built-in shower would be nice. Interestingly, we are yet to use the shower in our campervan.

With our priorities more-or-less itemized we began our research. This entailed going to RV shows and wandering around campgrounds. Recall all this was now some six years ago. We were in no hurry to invest in a campervan; we needed to save-up the money anyway, but wanted one by the time I retired. We finally settled on about three models. One day while driving on US Freeway 95 we saw a Roadtrek (one of the models on our short list but until then we had not seen inside one) and followed it into a Rest Area. The owners were more than happy to show us around – we were hooked. I sent away for the brochure and DVD.

To my pleasant surprise, as a Canadian, it was then that I found out the Roadtrek was a Canadian conversion. We looked at all the models and settled on the 190-Popular.

Then it was a few years of saving and continuous searching for a secondhand Roadtrek that we could afford and was in good condition.

As I mentioned earlier we returned to Canada in August 2010 with the view to my retiring early in 2012, by which time I would be 67 years old and it would definitely be time to sleep off-the-ground! We kept looking, as did a local dealer, for the Roadtrek of our dreams.

On a Wednesday in April 2011 I just happened to Google "Used Roadtrek" and came upon a site I had not used before. And there she was, a 2004 190-Popular owned since new by Margot, an elderly widow. I was on the phone and exchanging emails with Margot's granddaughter for the rest of the week. On Sunday with great excitement and anticipation Jay and I took the Greyhound bus to Toronto then another bus to Acton west of Toronto en-route to Kitchener. We were pretty sure we would buy the vehicle so there was no need to go in our own car. To cut the story short, we viewed, wiggled underneath and test drove the Roadtrek Sunday afternoon. That evening in the hotel restaurant we celebrated the end of our search and the beginning of our Roadtrek adventures. Monday morning we concluded the sale and licensing then drove the Roadtrek to the service centre that Margot had used, for some instruction on the Roadtrek's systems. Then as the proud new owners we drove home to Ottawa.



Jay and Graham with Margot

Very soon thereafter we joined the FMCA and its affiliate Roadtrek International.

Know Your Roadtrek

So far, due to schedule conflicts, we have been unable to attend a Roadtrek International Tech Rally and we remain anxious to participate. Despite four trips totaling 80 days on the road and, more instruction by our local RV service centre we are still learning the Roadtrek's systems. Our one criticism is that the Roadtrek Owner's Manual leaves something to be desired. We have finally figured out how to use most of the systems but we have found the water system to be quite confusing. With service centre help we have the water system levers more-or-less correctly oriented though we still do not seem to be using one of the fresh water tanks!!

In the summer of 2011 we took off on our first excursion, a two weeks trip, oblivious to how unfamiliar we were with the Roadtrek's systems! In retrospect we should have undertaken a shorter, local shake-down trip first. Even what have now become simple tasks were difficult the first time out. For example upon arriving at our first campground we decided to put out the awning - something we had not done before. Even with the not-so-helpful owner's manual we struggled (and cursed) to release the awning vertical posts from their stowed position. I should confess that the lack of clarity in the manual might have been compounded because Jay and I were

“grumpy” having driven too far in one day, another lesson - see Know Your Pace below.

Roadtrek Add-Ons

Our 190-Popular is the Anniversary version and so came with the Continental Spare Tire kit (a must in our opinion since the rear storage area is only just sufficient). We have added three items to our Roadtrek; a bike rack, a second auxiliary battery, and an Ezee-Lift.

Though we are not serious cyclists it is very convenient to have bikes along if only to cycle to the campground bathroom and the local store. Though, they are useful for sightseeing and biking around trails in nature reserves.

We want the option to dry-camp and not have to rely on campground power at every stop, hence the installation of a second auxiliary battery.

I try to keep the campsite essentials that are used at most stops stored in the rear compartment on the passenger side i.e. not behind the spare wheel. But, there are still many occasions when the spare tire has to be lowered (as well as the bike rack) to gain access to the other side of the storage compartment, but the spare tire kit weighs in excess of 70 lbs. I happened across an advertisement in the FMCA magazine for an Ezee-Lift (see <http://www.ezee-lift.com/>).

At US\$287 plus S&H it was not cheap (especially after also paying Canadian import duties) but it was a great buy. The Ezee-Lift is a spring-loaded mechanism that is relatively easy to install to become part of the existing Roadtrek spare wheel raising and lowering mechanism. It makes the spare wheel appear to only weigh 20 lbs., so no more risk of a hernia when lowering or raising it!



Now if only I could figure out how to transport our beloved Old Town Penobscot canoe (and all the stuff that goes with it) and our comfy queen size Hatteras rope hammock!

Campsite Essentials

Campsite essentials, or as Jay would say “Toys for the Boys”, are of course a very personal choice. For example an avid barbeque cook who is not bothered by mosquitoes might trade storage of a screen house for a barbeque. Also, the “essentials” will be dictated by where you sit, cook and eat, which we do outdoors unless the weather or mosquitoes drive us inside.

My rule is if it is small it goes in a bag or a box (I use tool boxes and see-through net bags with a zipper). I have no small loose items in the external storage compartments.

Our campsite essentials include:

(1) *A large outdoor matt.*

At first we thought this might be an optional item but it soon became obvious it was essential. The matt provides a nice clean sitting area by the Roadtrek whether or not we have the awning out.

(2) *Folding camp chairs.*

We are still using the low level folding chairs we used when tent camping. They let you stick your legs out and provide some exercise getting in and out! But I have my eye on the folding Pico chair, though expensive they appear to be extremely well made. As with all things you get what you pay for and if you are

off on a multi-week/month RV tour you should have quality items.

(3) *Screen house/tent.*

Since Jay is particularly allergic to mosquitoes, no-see-ums and the like, we bought a good quality camping screen house. It has sides that can be rolled down and a ground sheet that can be fitted so it can be used as a tent (for the grandkids).

To our surprise we have only used it a couple of times when we were on the shores of the Upper Saint Lawrence River but I am sure when we venture across Canada (and back across the US) for three plus months this summer (2013) it will have plenty of use. The screen house/tent is stored in the rear compartment and its poles in the side compartment.

(4) *Tarp.*

When we were tent campers we put up a large orange tarp which being orange is bright a cheery. It uses six telescopic poles and a ridge pole across its width at the middle, ten guy ropes (two at right angles at each of the corner poles and one for each of the centre poles) and twenty pegs (I double peg guy ropes). We prefer the tarp (all parts were bought separately and I make my own guy ropes) to the screen house and put it up over the campsite table for any stays of two days or longer.

(5) *Two-person (two kiddies really) inflatable canoe.*

This is our one quirky item. As an ex Brit Jay likes to take baths so I bought a cheap inflatable canoe that I can fill up with warm water so Jay can have a bath. It hasn't been used yet but is in the back storage compartment just in case!

(6) *Plastic table cloth.*

Just because you are camping there is no need to rough it. We use a table cloth (with hold-down clips), arrange a centre piece with local rocks and wild flowers and even use serviettes when we eat - very civilized!

(7) *Small collapsible (coffee) table.*

This sits between our outdoor camping chairs to keep stuff off the ground!

(8) *Propane Stove.*

Since we do most cooking outside we carry a portable two burner camping stove. So far I have not bothered to connect the stove to the Roadtrek's propane system preferring the flexibility of small propane bottles. They last 2 to 3 days on average which at around \$5 each is not too extravagant.

(9) *Tools.*

One toolbox for all the hand tools you may need. Check out all the Roadtrek's systems and your campsite essentials that you might need to repair/adjust when on the road. Note for example the hot water tank drain plug that needs a socket and extension rod to reach. On our last trip we had something of an emergency when one of the Roadtrek stove burner knobs stuck in the open position. We had to turn off the propane at the main tank and open all doors and windows to avoid a catastrophe. I was able to dismantle the stove to expose the mechanism but lacked a very small socket to undo the stuck knob.

Fortunately we found an RV Centre not too far away and they fixed the problem which was caused by a build-up of corrosion. I have added a suitable wrench to my toolbox in case we have a repeat of the problem.

(10) *Bits and Pieces.*

I use two plastic tool boxes (approx. 20ins x 10ins x 10ins) for campsite *bits and pieces*. One contains extra propane bottles, spare rope, folding shovel, small axe and other stuff that is not used regularly. The other box contains those items that might be needed at each stop. It is stored where it is easily accessible in the rear stowage compartment. I bring this out and put it at one end of the campsite table. This box contains; large camping/hunting knife, fish filleting knife, clothes line, clothes pegs (in a bag), three propane bottles, candles, old jam jar (used as a candle holder), mini propane lamp and replacement gauze filaments, fire lighters (why bother with kindling!), matches, flashlight handheld (one is also in the Roadtrek) and headlamp, garbage bags, brush (for sweeping the campsite table), two decks of playing cards, barbeque fork and spatula, and a trivet.

(11) *Barbeque.*

The last item, the trivet, a stainless steel barbeque vegetable cooking basket and a barbeque basket with a long handle (sold for cooking fish) constitute my barbeque, and its parts take up less storage room than a conventional barbeque. The cast iron trivet hinges open into a V shape. It stands about 3 inches high, just high enough to be put over coals in the fire-pit on which I can put the basket with a long handle to cook steaks. If there is no fire-pit, or open fires are not allowed, I put charcoal briquettes in the barbeque stainless steel vegetable basket and place it on the trivet to get it off the ground. These work a treat but then we don't barbeque very often. Jay bought a small cast iron flat iron (the type used for fajitas) that she uses with the propane stove to cook fish and steaks, and I confess this is a much easier approach and less work for me!

(12) *Pegs and Guy Ropes.*

I have two see-through net bags with a zipper (available at any decent camping store) to store the guy ropes (I make my own which are more robust than the thin twine guy ropes that seem to come with tents etc. these days) and pegs. I have another smaller bag to store four steel pegs (like long nails) and the mallet. The steel pegs are to hold down the awning posts.

(13) *Spare Key.*

We learned the hard way! Usually we both have camper keys hanging from a lanyard around our necks since for reasons unknown our Roadtrek sometimes self-locks. Having been caught out twice, without our keys, we now have a spare key hidden outside.

(14) *Large Towel and Rubber Gloves.*

I keep these in the long compartment on the driver's side and within easy reach. The towel serves mostly as a kneeling mat when emptying, with rubber gloves on, the black and grey tanks.

(15) *Miscellaneous.*

Miscellaneous for us include; monopole for the camera or binoculars (I have missed too many wildlife shots setting up a tripod), hand pump (for bikes and inflatable toys), Boules (French lawn game), day pack (I have a LL

Bean Classic Continental Rucksack), two hiking poles (one for each of us), and leveling blocks - we sleep so much better if we are not rolling to one side or the other!.

A Place for Everything and Everything in Its Place

When we moved from Washington DC to Ottawa we learned from our moving van driver the moving man's mantra "If it don't shake it don't break". The same of course is true for campervan storage. Jay makes full use of dish drying-up towels, rubberized matting on shelves etc. to ensure our cutlery, dishes, pans, glassware etc. not only do not break but do not produce an annoying rattle when we are underway.

For our clothes we each have a nylon and see-through net bag with zipper. Both are approximately 6 inches diameter x 24 inches long (670 cu ins/11 litres).



We find these bags better than canvas or stiffer fabric bags since they easily fit (squish) into the compartments above the rear bed on the left and right sides. Our rule is if you cannot get all your clothes and spare towels in one compartment you have got too much. The exceptions are rain gear, anorak and (optional) dressier jackets that go in the wardrobe (with the wine in a six bottle bag!). We have found that it is best to roll up all clothing for packing. This way you get more in and they don't crease.

We use the drawer under the passenger seat (by the side door) for shoes. We have found that Crocks are ideal for campsites.

External storage is Graham's domain. In the long compartment on the driver's side I store: the poles for the tarp and screen house, water hose, a power extension cord (and electrical socket adapter), collapsible rake (to clean the campsite when necessary), 2 bags of pegs and guy ropes for the tarp, 1 bag with the metal pegs for the awning poles and a mallet, external shower hose and head, towel (to kneel on when draining the tanks) and a pair of gauntlet style rubber gloves, the barbecue vegetable and cooking baskets, and awning winding pole. The built-in power cord lies on top of this lot.

Everything else under Campsite Essentials fit into the rear compartment, except the folding chairs (which travel on the bed), day pack, and the camera monopole which needs to be handy.

I found the storage of the awning winding pole and ridge pole in the rear compartment of the Popular-190 to be inconvenient. They kept falling out of their stowage clips and took up space. I now keep the winding pole in the side compartment and I place the ridge pole diagonally across the back and cushioned by the outdoor matt (which stores right across the back).

Know Your Pace

Our first trip was two weeks on the "Whale Route" on the north shore of the upper Saint Lawrence River between Tadoussac and Baie-Comeau. The Whale Route seems to be one of Canada's Best Kept Secrets. During our time there I spotted perhaps only three vehicles with out-of-Province plates. I suppose we should be grateful it is not better known outside Quebec, and so is not over-crowded, but those who have not been are missing a gem.

We arrived at our first scheduled stop, a KOA campground outside of Quebec City some 200 miles from Ottawa, "grumpy"!!! Lesson # 1: "pace yourselves". In the summer of 2012 we spent 6+ weeks in the Maritime Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It was a wonderful trip where we hugged the coasts, avoided main highways but we came to realize how essential it is to "know your pace".

When I had been on camping vacations in the Maritimes with Diving Club buddies some forty-years ago we always booked our campground. So, fearing that campgrounds might be full I booked all the campgrounds for the first four weeks of our trip. While this worked reasonably well we learned four lessons: campgrounds do not seem to fill-up to capacity so the need to book ahead is questionable, booking ahead removes schedule flexibility, it is not always easy to anticipate road conditions and all stops, and campgrounds do not always fit the description the owners have provided. One at the Head of Saint Margaret's Bay in Nova Scotia was so awful we checked out early and forfeited three days of pre-payment.

In sum, for our trip across Canada (and back across the US) in the summer of 2013 we will not book campgrounds but call ahead en-route.

In getting to "know your pace" certain things need to be taken into account for example do you prefer to stay away from main highways, what speed do you drive, do you stop to visit museums and so forth?

Jay and I share interests which include geography/scenery of all types but with a penchant for coastal routes (we are ex Brits where the sea is never far away), flora and fauna (more Jay's passion), learning about the culture and history of the region we are visiting, art and music, museums of various types, walks (versus strenuous hikes - those days seem to be behind us!), salt and fresh

water and mountains, shopping in farmers markets and the like.

Our preferences are to avoid main highways, drive at 50mph/80kmh or slower (which often means pulling over to let vehicles pass), make unscheduled stops (we are “touring” after all), stop for a picnic lunch.

On our Maritimes trip we found that for many legs we were averaging about 100 to 120 miles per day i.e. much less than we thought we would cover, and we really did not want to be behind the wheel for more than five hours each day with four being preferable. Though of course there were days which were longer.

We also found that after 2 to 3 days of one-night stops and driving we were ready for a longer break of two or more nights/days with only local sightseeing.

Know What is Expected of You

Two people, no matter how compatible, can expect some tension when living in a Type B RV for an extended period of time. We have gravitated to specific tasks so we are not tripping over each other. For example I do most of the campsite set-up chores (though setting up the tarp or screen house is a two-person job) while Jay converts the interior from our driving mode to camping mode. And, the same when we are de-camping.

We leave the rear bed made-up all the time we are travelling – it is just not worth the hassle converting it every day and in any event it is then always available for an afternoon nap! Since we do most things outside we have a cooler, water container, and washing up bucket that travel on the floor and then occupy the campsite table seat when we are parked.

By having our own known tasks, setting-up and packing-up is pretty efficient. We can usually be settled in within 30 minutes of arriving at a campsite, unless the tarp or

screen house is erected then it might take 60 minutes before we can sit down and relax with a cup of tea, if we have arrived early enough, or straight to Happy Hour if later!

I would also add that giving your travelling companion her or his “own time and space” when needed is important. We also have found that sharing laptops/iPADs and e-readers does not work so well so we have our own!

Despite how all this may sound I am a lucky guy since my spouse is also my best friend so surviving in a Type B is not hard.

Planning Your Trip

RV touring is perhaps one activity where “Plan your work and work your plan” does not or should not apply. Jay and I are masters at going to Plan B or C even D, to take advantage of some unexpected special interest such as an off-the-beaten-path gold-mine museum in the middle of Nova Scotia.

That said you should not set off without at least a notional route, knowledge of potential campgrounds, places of interest, and note when events might be taking place.

I am still learning but making progress with trip planning. For our trips so far I have prepared a detailed “daily itinerary” with the route, mileage, and notations for bookings made and places of interest to visit. What I am learning is that the approach for each trip might be different and will depend on the distance to be travelled, number of potential stops and schedule constraints. But, I am leaning towards trip plans that are not quite as detailed or fixed, at least not on a daily basis.

When we went along the Whale Route on the Upper Saint Lawrence we had in mind that we might take the ferry across the river, from Baie-Comeau at the northern end of our planned route, to the South Shore for our return. However, when we got to the region

we realized that the Saguenay Fjord, west of Tadoussac (at the beginning of the Whale Route), would be worth seeing in its entirety. So having spent some 8 days between Tadoussac and Baie-Comeau we re-traced our steps and then spent 3 delightful days touring all the way around the Saguenay Fjord.

The first four weeks of our Maritimes was all planned and worked well since we knew we wanted to hug the coast of Nova Scotia. But we were not sure how we would feel after our first month away in the Roadtrek so after Cape Breton our plans were open. After a month we were still in no hurry to return home – one of the privileges of retirement life – so we continued around the coast of Nova Scotia and then much of the coast of New Brunswick as we pointed ourselves more-or-less in the direction of home.

For our North America trip this summer (2013) we decided we would spend some two months crossing Canada (many just wiz across in ten days – bad idea) and a month returning across northern US (after a stop to visit our daughter in Portland, Oregon). To be on the safe side we have not booked anything early in the fall that might force us to return before we are ready.

I am planning this trip in a somewhat less detailed fashion than I have for previous trips. I began with MapQuest since it is a route planning tool I am very familiar with and I am pretty familiar with Canada. I tackled one Province at a time and chose the slightly more northern route (old Trans-Canada) so as to avoid as much as possible the busier southern Trans-Canada highway. The route will take us back-country from Ottawa to North Bay and along the shores of Lake Superior, then to Winnipeg in Manitoba, to Saskatoon in Saskatchewan and on to Edmonton, Alberta. We want to see the famous dinosaur fossil park and museum which is south of Calgary so we will head south from Edmonton then west to Banff and spend time in the Rockies between Banff and Jasper. After some research I found a back-

country route from Jasper to British Columbia which will allow us to approach Vancouver from the north. From there we go to Vancouver Island. Then head south to the US.

Having roughed out the route I checked the websites for all the towns we will travel through to see what would be interesting to visit and what events might be taking place, so we can try to manage our arrival accordingly. I have put these web-links in the plan so I can easily access them when we are on our way. I also checked out all the National and Provincial Parks on our route.

For this trip we will not make any campground reservations in advance since we do not want to be tied to a schedule or even the route in case we hear about something really interesting that is not too much of a diversion.

I have typed all this up and now have our cross-Canada itinerary, with Province by Province over view maps, all contained in just 18 pages, plus a one page grand Overview including schedule and cost estimates (see samples below).

Once the Canadian portion is done I will work on the return route through the US. All this will be loaded onto my iPad so as to minimize the paperwork to be carried – though we are old enough to like to have paper or laminated maps handy!

Look out for another article next year and I will tell you if this approach worked!

Cover for the Cross-Canada Trip Plan



Cross Canada Overview

<http://mapq.st/ZAzyj4>

- 3,600 miles
- 30 to 40 days Ottawa to Vancouver
Includes sightseeing & rest days
- Average 120 to 90 miles per day

Cost Estimates

- 250 gallons of fuel - approx \$1,250
- Camping (40 nights @ \$40 per night) - \$1,600
- Food @ \$50/day - \$2,000
- Museums, Excursions etc - \$2,000
- Estimate total expenses: \$7,000

Typical Page from Trip Plan

MANITOBA
350 miles ON/MB border to MB/SK border
Approx 5 days (includes 3 in Winnipeg)



<http://mapq.st/Vg0y2V>
<http://www.travelmanitoba.com>
www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/parks

(A) Kenora, ON
Hwy 44 from ON Border
(or Trans Canada Hwy 1 from 17/ON Border)

(B) Whitemouth
Hwy 44
(76 miles from Kenora, ON)

- Route through Whiteshell Provincial Park
<http://www.whiteshell.mb.ca/>
West Hawk Lake campground en-route

(C) Winnipeg
(70 miles from Whitemouth....150 miles from Kenora, ON)
<http://www.tourismwinnipeg.com/>
Average temperatures in June high 75°F low 50°F

- Arrow Head RV Park (10 mins S/E of Winnipeg)
<http://www.arrowheadrvpark.ca/>
- Exchange District (early 20th Century architecture)
- Manitoba Museum (in Exchange District)
- Winnipeg Art Gallery (large collection Inuit Art)
- Saint Boniface (across Red River) – Cathedral & Museum
- Assiniboine Park (flora)
- Living Prairie Museum (June open only on Sundays)
- Folk Festival early July @ Birds Hill Provincial Park
www.winnipegfolkfestival.ca
- Boat Trips www.paddlewheelcruises.com
- Walking tours of The Forks

Manitoba continued on next page

A note concerning Road Atlases: we are not great fans of road atlases since it is hard to get the big picture for touring. Also, most do not overlay the start and finish points between pages which can be annoying or confusing. Our preference is to use Province or State maps.

Also, in addition to often being misleading campground directories do not have as many campgrounds listed as are in the annual Tourist Guides published by each Province or State, or on-line Apps.

Trip Reports

Jay's parents had a small campervan in England after her father retired – they might have been one of the first to have a campervan in the UK where towed caravans are more the norm. When travelling around the UK and Europe they kept a diary. When they became too old to campervan they relived their trips by reading their diaries.

We keep a hard cover note-book in our Roadtrek where I record in real-time the boring stuff like expenses, fuel fill-ups etc. But at the end of each day, usually during Happy Hour, we write down where we went, what we did and what we learned. It is usually just one page to act as an aide-memoire.

After our Maritimes Trip I wrote a "Trip Report" with selected photos included. The main body of the Report is 16 pages long but with the two Attachments (History, Culture and Art, and Jay's Flora and Fauna Report) it is a 38 page treatise! It is really just for our own benefit but the writing of it proved most enjoyable and educational. We will continue the practice.

It is impossible to remember all you see and learn on such a trip, especially if you are interested in a region's history and culture. However, writing the Trip Report forced us (Graham mostly) to actually read the brochures we had picked up along the way and carry out some on-line research. As a

consequence our Maritimes Trip Report covers not only the scenic stuff but sections on the history of the French and British settlement of Canada (it all started here), the Acadians story, Scottish immigration, the region's boat building and fishing industries and the Mi'Kmaq who lived on this land long before the Europeans showed up.

I believe that your RV trips will be enriched if you consider recording your experiences.

“A Roadtreking We Will Go!” Lessons for Touring

Well that is what we have learned so far. We have much more to learn to derive the full benefit from our Roadtreking but I think we have made a good start.

Regardless of your personal preferences and interests things that you might consider are:

- (1) Know what you want in an RV. This will be based on where you want to go and want you want to do. It will also be dictated by establishing your priorities for your living space.
- (2) Know your vehicle and its systems. We recommend that you do not learn-on-the road! Read the Manual, operate all the systems in your drive-way, seek advice, and make your first trip a local shake-down trip.
- (3) Establish your Campsite Essentials. That is what you cannot do without to make your adventure pleasurable, and pack 'em!
- (4) Ensure you that there is a place for everything and everything is in its place. You will have more time for fun if you are not forever searching for something or trying to squeeze it in somewhere. Pack the same way every time.
- (5) Know your pace. You and your travelling companion(s) will get “grumpy”, stressed

or tired (or all three) if you try to follow an over crammed schedule, drive too far for comfort, drive faster to make up for lost time, and don't stop to enjoy those special places of interest.

- (6) Share the workload. You and your travelling companion(s) will benefit if the work is shared with each doing what each is most capable of doing, and keep the same work shares so each knows what is expected of him or her.
- (7) Plan your trip. But perhaps do not over-plan!
- (8) Write a Trip Report. Not for everyone perhaps but give it a try you might be surprised at what an enriching experience it is and how it adds to the post-trip pleasure.

Happy Roadtreking

