

2018 Senior Friendship Tour Daily Report

An update was added below for each day of the Senior Friendship Tour of the Maritime provinces. You could follow on our Facebook page. Although the USWCA is not on Twitter or Instagram, you could find postings on these social media sites using #USWCAFriendshipTour2018.

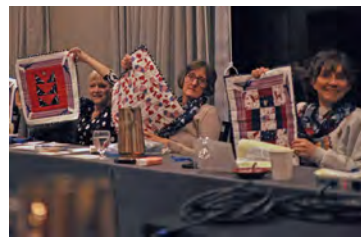
Sunday, November 4, 2018

We gathered!

All 16 members of the 2018 Friendship Tour made it to Boston where we had dinner and met with the tour coordinators. Much appreciation to Molly Jensen (pictured below, standing) and her team for pulling together this wonderful event.



Each of the 2018 tour curlers received beautiful quilt squares as a place to put all the pins we'll collect over the next two weeks. Each one is unique and a delight.



Pin exchange started with each curler sharing their home club's pin.



Monday, November 5, 2018



This was a day of disappointments for the Friendship Tour participants (15 of 16 pictured above in red) starting with our direct flight to Halifax being cancelled. Rerouted through New York and Montreal, we finally arrived at 1 am, missing our chance to visit and curl at Silver Fox Curling Club in Summerside, Prince Edward Island. Instead we spent many hours in many airports.



Thank goodness we had good company.

The happiest moment of the day was meeting a Scots tour just finishing their own round of curling in Canada. The 22 curlers from west of Glasgow were part of an exchange that happens every 8 years with clubs in Ottawa Valley.

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

After crossing the impressive Confederation Bridge into Prince Edward Island (PEI), we got into clubs and onto ice! First stop was Cornwall Curling Club where we had a great lunch and 4-end games.



We also met two ladies who had visited several of our home clubs during the 1997 Friendship Tour, Shirley Lank and Eleanor Meek (pictured below).



Then onto Summerside, PEI to the Silver Fox Curling and Yacht Club for our welcome dinner.



Unique overnight accommodations were in the Marguerite Bourgeoys Centre, a former convent, now a retreat center run by the Congregation de Notre-Dame.

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

Here we are on the front steps of the Marguerite Bourgeoys Center in Summerside, Prince Edward Island getting ready to head out for our first full curling game today (picture on the left). We loved staying with Sister Joan (picture on the right, front row, left) and appreciated the center's tranquility and hospitality.



It was a spectacularly sunny day and our drive took us over the Confederation Bridge into New Brunswick. The bridge is a work of engineering beauty, one of the longest bridges over salt water.



After our morning drive and lunch, we arrived at the Thistle-St. Andrew Curling Club in St. John, New Brunswick. What a wonderful and welcoming club. It was great to finally play an eight end game and see how our teams worked together and started to gel.



Afterward, we enjoyed a wonderful dinner prepared by the club, debuted our singing ability as a group with some awesome curling songs. Their club then entertained us with some group games that had us laughing and shouting. Tonight we were billeted in club members' homes - a great way to share more time with our Canadian friends before we set off on a tour of the area tomorrow.

Thursday, November 8, 2018

Our day started in St. John, population 97,575 and a bilingual community. We drove through the original part of town that had been rebuilt after a fire in 1877.

One of the highlights was to see Kings Square which holds several monuments. One of these is the Young monument for the man who attempted to save a child in Courtney Bay from drowning. Next to the square is the City Market with shopping for fresh food and homemade crafts.



The Reversing Falls is a natural wonder in St. John where the river and Bay of Fundy flow into each other. As the high or low tide comes in or out, the flow changes causing turbulent waters. We saw a few otters bobbing in the rushing waters.



We took the scenic route to Moncton to see more of the Bay of Fundy. Then stopped to see the Hopewell Rocks and the flats. The tide was low so we got a good view.



The day concluded with a simple dinner at a local restaurant.

Several people have inquired why we are visiting Canada because they notice our team attire. We met an aerobics group in Sackville while on a bus break that will come to watch us play in Amherst on Friday.

Friday, November 9, 2018

Luggage Curling - loading the motor coach on the way to Moncton Curling Club.



Mayor Arnold of Moncton (pictured below on the right) is presented with the USWCA Friendship Tour flag.



Performing for the Moncton lady curlers after a fabulous lunch.



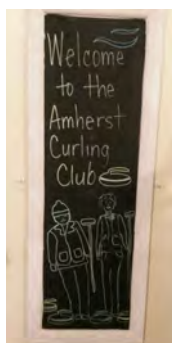
Ending the day on a high note with a sing-a-long at Bellas' Bistro.



Saturday, November 10, 2018

An action-packed day!

We had our first taste of snowy, slushy weather as we headed to the Amherst Curling Club, Amherst, Nova Scotia.



This 4-sheet club of less than 100 members recruited additional women from the North Cumberland Community Curling Club, located in Pugwash Village, NS, to host an exceptional curling and social experience. Sheila Christie (picture on right, front row in black), Deputy Mayor of Amherst, was on hand to deliver the first stone straight to the button.



During lunch, our hostess Rhonda Perry made her stand-up comedy debut, regaling us with a selection of double-entendre curling terms. After we enjoyed our cookies and ice cream dessert, Rhonda informed us (in jest, we think) that the cookies had been specially baked with an ingredient "now legal in Canada".

After lunch, the men and women of our host club performed a hilarious rendition of the infamous Saturday Night Live "Corksoaker" routine. Soon afterwards we were visited by Nurse Pain, who attempted unsuccessfully to perform a gloved exam on our valiant motor coach driver, Mike Gorveatt.



Heading for the lovely Cambridge Suites Hotel in Halifax, we made an unscheduled stop at the Dartmouth Curling Club, home to both Mike Gorveatt and Tour Courier Donna Sameoto (picture on left, Mike in back row, and Donna front row blue vest) where Mike gave each tour member a Dartmouth Club Pin. (Donna Sameoto is also in the picture on the right of the 2017 Women's Masters Championship team. We've been traveling with curling royalty!)



While sampling locally brewed beers, such as a Nine Locks Porter, we watched the Junior curlers at play and met many of the Junior parents. Andrew Paris the Junior Development Coordinator for Nova Scotia Province, left the ice briefly to speak with us.



Today we said goodbye to courier Gloria Turner (pictured above standing on right with Tour Captain Debbie Horn), who headed back home to Prince Edward Island. She has been with us for most of this week. Thank you Gloria, for all your help and guidance!

Sunday, November 11, 2018

Sunday in Halifax was clear, cold, windy, and a federal holiday. It was also our mid-tour day off.

Many of us began the day by participating in the Remembrance Day ceremony at Grand Parade. While poems and prayers were offered in honor of those lost in war, especially World War I, cannons were fired from the nearby Citadel fortress twenty-one times at one minute intervals. The effect was powerful and impressive.



After warming up from more than an hour in the bitter wind, we went in separate directions. Activities included small groups or individuals doing laundry, steaming in the hotel's hot tub or sauna, visiting the star-shaped 18th century Citadel fort (pictured below), touring the waterfront, catching up on emails, flying a kite, visiting family, running, or watching the finals in the Grand Slam of Curling.



Monday, November 12, 2018

Back on the road today after a needed rest for two nights in Halifax. We started the day with a driving tour of the city of Halifax and then set off for Wolfville located on the west coast of Nova Scotia on the Bay of Fundy. The Wolfville Curling Club was the first club to welcome us with a broom bridge as we exited the bus.



The club was warm and welcoming and they kicked off our visit with a moving video of the Province of Nova Scotia with accompanying singing by a Celtic singer from Cape Breton. It brought a few tears to our eyes - we can see why they are so proud of their Province. After a great match up, we shared drinks and entertained their club. They surprised us with an impromptu singing of *Farewell Nova Scotia* before we boarded our bus for the hotel.



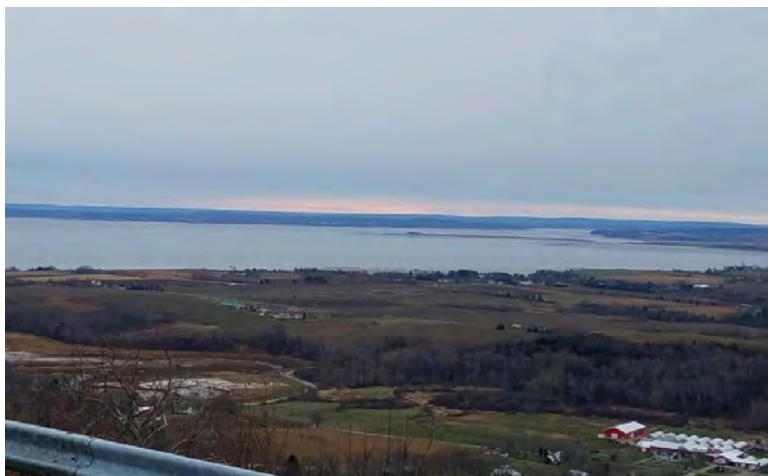
The night ended with a fabulous dinner at The Port restaurant, where we shared more comradely with our bus driver Mike and couriers Donna and Allison.



To bed early tonight - we have two games to play tomorrow.

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

Day 9 started early with breakfast in Wolfville, Nova Scotia so we could make a sightseeing stop at the Blomindon look off. The view from the north mountain over the Nova Scotia valley was beautiful despite the dreary weather. This area is largely a farming community with apple orchards and grape fields. You can see the Bay of Fundy from this view.



Thank you to the Berwick Curling Club who offered to take us in with short notice to play at their new facility. We had a wonderful experience playing here. It has only been open one month. The ice was a bit fun to walk on but great for play. The ice crew is still working on preparing it to be perfect.





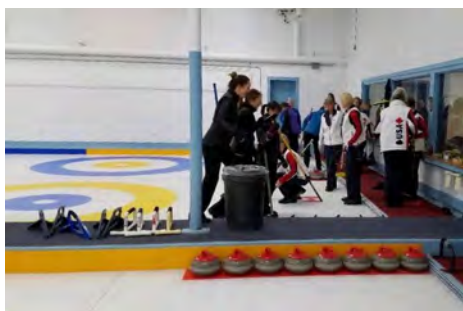
A soup lunch was provided after play along with the US team finishing it off with the entertainment.



The weather added another element of fun. We saw the first snow since arriving in Canada.

The days are going by quickly with so much to do. The time we spend at the clubs just doesn't seem long enough.

After a rest stop to check in at the hotel, it was off to the Greenwood Curling Club for a soup dinner and another round of curling.



The Greenwood Curling Club is located on the Canadian Air Force Base in Greenwood, Nova Scotia. The hospitality included a dinner, dessert, and of course, the US Team entertainment. The Women's club is celebrating 50 years this year at the club. The late evening ended with wine and Friendship in the motel lobby.

Wednesday, November 14, 2018

We left Kingston, Nova Scotia with heavy hearts knowing today was our last day of curling. Our spirits were lifted as we enjoyed "Men with Brooms" on the ride to the UNESCO town of Lunenburg.

Our first stop was the historic Lunenburg Academy Of Music which also displayed creative artwork.



We then had a driving tour of the quaint seaside village of Lunenburg.



Lunenburg Curling Club was our next stop where we were greeted with a delicious lunch followed by curling against the host club as well as ladies from Bridgewater Curling Club.



A 4th end toast of maple cream is a tradition worth keeping!

We ended our day at Jac's diner where we enjoyed old fashioned burgers and milk shakes.

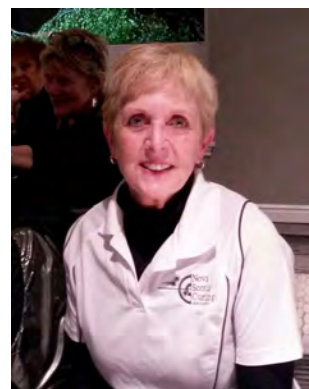


Thursday, November 15, 2018

This was a day of luggage arranging, shopping, sightseeing, and farewell festivities. On our way to Peggy's Cove, we made a quick stop in Mahone Bay to do some speed-shopping at the wonderful Amos Pewter store, where we found many treasures designed and made at their local workshop. Conditions at the spectacularly beautiful Peggy's Cove were clear, cold, and very windy, which didn't stop us from walking among the rocks to take photos before heading inside for lunch and a little more shopping.



On arrival in Halifax, many took a brisk walk to Jennifer's of Nova Scotia, to shop for more locally handcrafted items. A short time later, we were on our way to our farewell banquet. Courier Donna Sameoto had arranged for us to be wined and dined at the Brightwood Golf and Country Club, where she is a member. Donna then introduced us to Rexanne Lugar and Elise Sloan (center picture, left to right), who traveled to Illinois and Wisconsin as part of the 1997 Canadian Senior Women's Friendship Tour. Adding to our already special night, we also had the privilege of dining with Virginia Jackson (picture on right), Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Curling Association (NSCA), and Cathy Dalziel, President of the NSCA.



After dinner, we all introduced ourselves. Team Captain Debbie Horn presented our gifts of thanks and appreciation to Couriers Donna and Alison. The evening ended with our merry band singing one more song, to the tune of "Oh Donna", as a final expression of affection for our intrepid Courier.



Our last stop was a quick walk across the street from the hotel, to visit the 2 Crows Brewing Company of Halifax.



Another good time was had by all!

Friday, November 16, 2018

Our last day of the tour was a little like our first, starting with a delay. The first snow of the season in Halifax fouled transportation. Rather than our planned 9:15 am departure, the snow kept our bus from arriving at our hotel until 11 am. We waited in the hotel breakfast room: talking, catching up on journals or posts, or playing cards like cribbage and queens.



Plan B turned out to be terrific - we went to the Halifax Curling Club to the inaugural Stu Sells 1824 Halifax Classic, part of the World Curling Tour. (1824 refers to the year the club was founded, making it the oldest active curling club in Canada.)



The draw included Brad Gushue; he and his team graciously posed with us. The entire club was warmly welcoming and we had a terrific final morning with lunch, drink, and exciting high level curling.



Then it was off to the Halifax airport where, despite lots of smiles we sadly said goodbye to our fabulous bus driver Mike Gorveatt and courier extraordinaire Donna Sameoto (both of the Dartmouth Curling Club).





We made our way through customs, boarded our delayed flight to Boston, slowly claimed our luggage, and sang one final version of our "Wild Rover" adaptation. Then we went our separate ways - some to visit family; others to home; and some to spend a night in Boston before their flights home on Saturday morning.

We parted with wishes for safe travels and sincere hopes to see each other again soon. It was very difficult to leave 16 new best friends forged through a fabulous shared curling experience!

