

## MUSEUM NEWS

Hello Everyone,

May was a whirlwind of activity at the RCM with a tour almost every day and June is shaping up to be just as busy. Teachers are planning their end of the year field trips and we are so happy that many of them are choosing the Railway Coastal Museum as their destination.

Although Little Toot Tuesdays have finished for the summer, we are starting up a brand new program for families, Chug Along Family Hour. Bring along the kids to the museum starting on June 29th for an hour of puppet shows, crafts, games, and special activities aimed at children of all ages! The program runs from 2:00 to 3:00 pm and is something different to do during the summer break.

With the renovations to the museum complete, we are looking forward to receptions this month and hope that you all come in to look at the new layout in the museum. The RCM is a unique venue for your corporate or private event. The building itself is 110 years old as of June 3<sup>rd</sup> and is a former train station. Your guests will feel transported to another time!

On June 22, we are participating in Windows on the West End. This annual event highlights the great gems located on the west end of Water Street. There is free admission and activities for all ages running the entire day. Hope to see you!

The RCM Staff

### The Fisherman's Trip: Labrador and the Coastal Boat Service

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*Fishing in Labrador was an essential part of the year for fishermen in many areas of Newfoundland.*



THE BURGEO ON THE LABRADOR COAST. 1940

*The 'Fisherman's Trip' on the coastal boats provided the transportation needed to bring people to their summer fishing camps and also the supplies that the permanent residents of Labrador desperately needed. The arrival of the coastal boats marked the start of summer and the end of isolation.*

Labrador has always been a place where resources were plentiful but people were not. Before 1815, there were virtually no permanent settlers in Labrador. Migratory fishing was the way of life for the majority of those who came to work in Labrador.

The first Europeans who came to Labrador are believed to be the Norse, who came to Labrador for the bountiful cod fishing. Later it was the Basque that migrated to Labrador every summer for the cod and whale hunt. These groups provided the foundations that Labradorians built their economy upon.

It was not until 1764 that Newfoundlanders



started migratory fishing in Labrador. The commissioner Hugh Paliser wanted Newfoundland to have a strong navy and felt that life at sea was the way to achieve this. He promoted summer fishing in Labrador as a way to expand the cod fishery in Newfoundland.

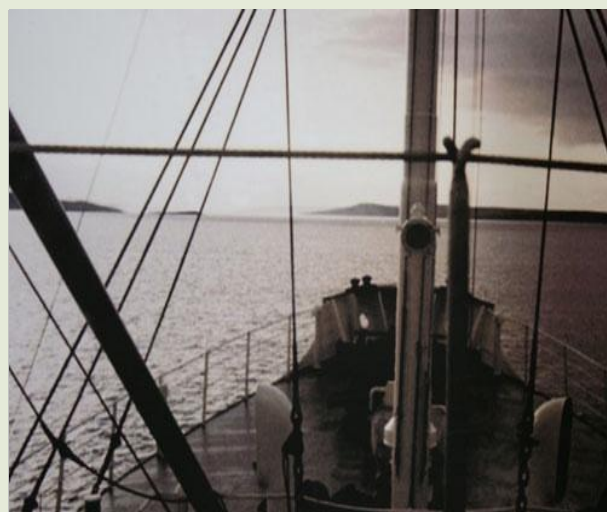
In the early 1800s, people settled in Labrador and many of these people would move to the coast in the summer for fishing and then go inland, or 'in the woods,' to do winter's work. This included making barrels to ship fish in the summer. The tradition of migrating from the coast continued until the cod moratorium.

Not only did the permanent settlers migrate in the summer but many Newfoundlanders also came to Labrador to take advantage of the fishing. The cod had become scarce in certain areas, such as in Conception Bay, and these fishermen would travel to the north with their families every summer, bringing with them supplies.

Getting supplies into Labrador was not an easy task. There was a very short window of time, normally 2-3 months, where ships could easily make their way up the coast. The Coastal Boat Service was given the task of making these crucial trips. Boats, such as the *S.S. Kyle* and the *S.S. Bonavista*, made the round trip up to twice a year bringing the fishermen to and from their summer camps and acting as a lifeline for the residents of Labrador. This trip was known as 'the Fisherman's Trip' and the men would stay on the upper deck and their families would stay in the passenger



CAPT. JOE PRIM IN FRONT OF  
THE *HOPEDALE* IN HOPEDALE



VIEW FROM THE *NONIA* DURING A  
FISHERMAN'S TRIP



FISHING CAMP AT SMOKEY, THE  
BRIGUS SUMMER CAMP

### The Gem of the Fleet

The S.S. *Kyle* is one of the most famous boats from the Coastal Boat fleet and is the most famous boat that made the Labrador run. It may have been used by fishermen and sportsmen but the ship was luxurious to attract tourist.

The ship was built in England and had a beautiful music room on board done in birds eye maple with a piano of matching wood. The main saloon boasted mahogany decorations and was very fashionable a stark contrast to her nickname, 'The Bulldog of the North.'

accommodations for a reduced rate of \$6.00.

The coastal boasts were anticipated by those who lived in Labrador because they brought old friends and family to Labrador, along with much needed supplies. The boats would be full of people and goods such as nets, rods, cod traps, trap skiffs, lumber, and enough food for the season, including livestock. There was so much on board that at each stop it could take up to 12 hours to load and unload the boats.

The supplies were essential not only for the success of the fishing season but also the survival of the residents of Labrador. The Coastal Boats provided access to medical care and medicine, as doctors and nurses were not always available in the communities. Dr. William Grenfell pioneered medical services in Labrador and successfully petitioned to have hospital facilities on board the *Kyle* because the nearest hospital was 50 to 100 miles away. The timely arrival of the Coastal Boat was the difference between life and death for many people.

The long trip to Labrador provided an income for many and a lifeline for the population. The summer Coastal Boat journeys continued until 1992, with the cod moratorium but the memories of the excitement and joy that they brought lives on.



## JUNE FEATURE

This beautiful pendant was made right here in Dover, NL and showcases the beauty of Newfoundland and Labrador!

The stone is Labradorite and the beautiful blue tones reflect the ice and ocean of Labrador. Every way you turn this pendant creates new colours and depth.

FOR THE KIDS!

[www.railwaycoastalmuseum.ca](http://www.railwaycoastalmuseum.ca)



Explore Reading with your Favourite Train Friends!]

The RCM has wonderful new books for every age group and price point! These bright and colourful storybooks bring to life the worlds of Chuggington and Thomas and Friends and help you little ones discover their love for reading.

Ranging from \$4.99 to \$9.99 these books are too good to pass up!