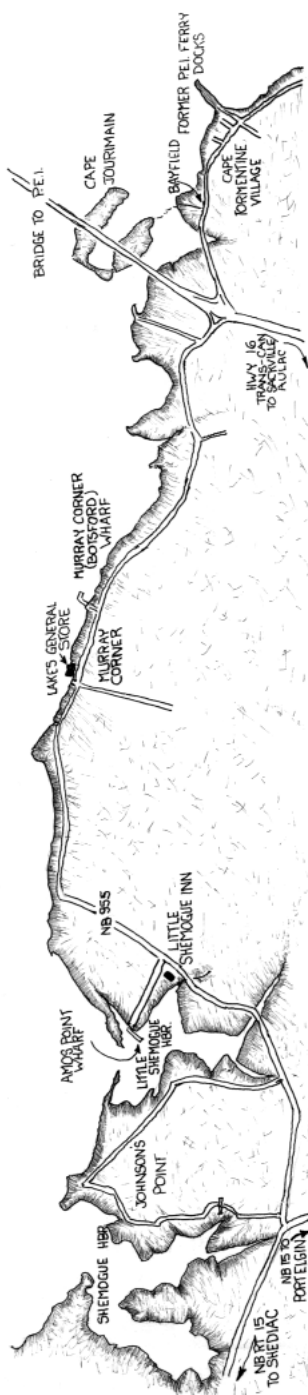




# Touring Tantramar series no. 9

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TANTRAMAR  
Tourism Association

## hans durstling's off-roading in tantramar

# Cape Tormentine part 2

Go back to the "T" junction of 970 South and 970 North. Head north, through Baie Verte, an old Acadian settlement. Everything here speaks age and heritage, the old stores and churches, houses with shrubs in front as thick as tree trunks from a hundred years of growth.

Baie Verte and Port Elgin (the latter came later, and was a prosperous fish processing and cloth mill town) were intimately linked to Fort Beausejour and the Tantramar French Acadian settlements. An old French road connected Fort Beausejour, Baie Verte, and Fort Gaspereau at Port Elgin where French supply ships docked en route from Louisbourg to Quebec.

This, in a sense, is a forgotten territory. Little here has been developed or interpreted. But this is fortunate in a way, because it's still all your own to discover. No pressure-treated lumber boardwalks, no government nature guides in ecologically correct Indiana Jones desert-tan shirts. Here, you can explore on your own, which lends the mysteries so much more magic. The best way to begin is with a visit to the Monro Heritage Center on Spring Street in Port Elgin. Call the Port Elgin Village Office (506) 538-2120 for information on opening hours.

Leaving Port Elgin takes us to Cape Tormentine, the former busy ferry terminal. You can go directly, via the Trans-Canada, but the Upper Cape Road, NB Rt. 960, which hugs the shore, takes you past old seaside farmsteads and is the more scenic way to go.

Now you come to Cape Tormentine, the former busy ferry terminal town. There's a tourist bureau in the old railway station; you can walk out to the old ferry docks (at your own risk — it's not encouraged but it can be done) and fish mackerel in late summer along with the locals. There's a lovely sandy beach on the right side of the old ferry terminal, and a spectacular view of the new Confederation Bridge to PEI. At the foot of the bridge lies Cape Jourmain, the closest land point to



Prince Edward Island, and soon to become a government nature preserve.

Continue west along the shore road (now becomes NB 955) and turn right toward the shore about 8 km past the Trans Canada. Look for the corrugated metal quonset hut and the two low storage sheds. Now you're at the Murray Corner wharf, where as many as 30 or more lobster boats may be docked at a time. This is a real, small, working wharf.

Another 2 km on along 955 you'll come to Johnny Lake's store at Murray Corner, as real and down to earth as its neighbour the fishing wharf. Here you can buy copper tube and coffee and coconut flakes and camp fuel and door hardware, mousetraps, ice cream and fishermen's gloves. This is a general store that truly deserves the name. There aren't many left.

And now come two highlights of this excursion. About 8 km past Johnny Lake's store, turn right down the Amos Point Road. It's a narrow, patched, paved, road. The shrubs crowding close on both sides give it a sort of jungle feel. And there you are, at the almost utterly unknown Amos Point wharf. Even locals don't know about this place. Here, with tide running out of the Little Shemogue estuary, I counted 35 blue heron on the flats, plus a bald eagle sitting impassively while being dive bombed by terns. A stretch of sand dune lay just across a muddy channel from the wharf. This is a must-see.

Back on the main road just under 2 km further west you'll see the sign to the Little Shemogue Inn. Hidden in the woods, it's run by Klaus Sudbrack — another of the area's German emigrants who first tried his hand at farming. Here, as at the Amos Point Wharf, you get the feeling of stepping into another world. A baby grand piano stands in the foyer, a Persian samovar perches on an exotic wood table which encircles a yard wide metal dish from Tanzania. In the corner a woven wicker chair's armrests assume the form of elephant trunks. Hummingbirds dart through the flowers outside the window; elegant wine glasses grace the dinner table and classical music plays softly in the background. Amos Point is an oasis of timeless, unspoiled nature; this, an oasis of international caliber taste.

And yes, there is a connection.