

Estonia & Russia: May 21 – 29, 2011
St. Laurance Cruise: June 2 – 11, 2011

We had planned a cruise from Montreal to Boston to celebrate Kathleen's 60th birthday in advance as one usually does for such trips. Then, on short notice, Kathleen got an opportunity to travel to Estonia to represent the University of North Texas at a conference just a few weeks before our cruise. This is my journal from those trips.

Part I

21 May 2011 – Saturday

DFW Airport

So another trip abroad begins... with a delay. Apparently, the fog here in Dallas is having an impact: our 9:15 flight to Chicago has been delayed to (so far) 9:45. Not a worry: our flight to Helsinki doesn't leave until 3:40 so we have plenty of time to spare.

Writing with a pen and paper seems strange in this PC-Centric world, but this odd habit that began on my first trip to Europe is so much a part of my foreign travel routine that I simply cannot imagine not doing it. Modern air travel, as fast as it is, seems in some ways paradoxical because there is so much time spent just sitting and waiting and, in me at least, this triggers some latent need to both reflect on line and anticipate the upcoming adventures as well as this compulsion to write about it.

And so it begins...

O'Hara Airport

The delay at DFW gave us enough time for a quick breakfast, with plenty of time for lunch in Chicago. Once again, we seem to be eating our way to Europe! The Macaroni Grill is a nice place to eat and watch the flow of humanity pass by. We split a pasta and still walked away stuffed!

Got some cash (US and Euro's), bought a charger for Kathleen's iPad (the one for her iPhone does not have enough power) and a stylus, then waited in the Ambassadors Club for our departure time (3:40) to roll around.

22 May 2011 – Sunday

On the Ferry to Tallin

We had a bit of a delay leaving Chicago: the APU stopped working as we were pushing back from the gate. They fixed it quickly though so we lost almost no time. The flight was long but the time passed quickly, and we arrived on time at 8:30. Even though we had to wait in line awhile to clear emigrations and then even longer to get our luggage. We were in downtown Helsinki at the train station by 10:00 after the 30-minute bus-ride on the Fin Air bus.

Caught the wrong tram (3B instead of 3T – my bad!) and had a bit of a rush to recover from that to get to the Silja terminal in time to catch the 10:30 ferry. We made it, only to discover that the boat would be heading to Stockholm from *that* Silja terminal. The high speed ferry to Tallin left from another terminal some distance away, so we walked for 15-minutes or so in the beautiful sunny weather to the Viking terminal and caught the 11:30 boat instead.

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Arrived in Tallin in brilliant sunshine. Took a cab to the hotel and promptly crashed – we were really tired!

Got up around 6:00 pm feeling much refreshed. Walked over to the old town and ate dinner at an Italian Rick-Steves-recommended restaurant (which we never would have found on our own!) that was descent. Finished off the evening over a beer at the Market Square, thoroughly enjoying the radiant heaters and wool lap blankets.

23 May 2011 – Monday

In Tallin

Slept well and woke up to rain. Since Kathleen's conference did not start until 1:00 pm we braved the weather and started out following the Rick Steves walking tour. The morning was rainy and the town was crowded with blue and yellow plastic clad tourists off of the tour boats that were docked nearby. In the rain everybody wanted to get inside of any church or building so we didn't see anything except the exterior of the buildings and groups of wet tourists running from building to building.

We had Italian for lunch (seems to suit our time-addled systems!) on the square before she hustled off for the 1:00 start of her conference.

I went back into the Old Town and retraced some of our steps. The rain had stopped so I took a lot of pictures of the town.

Kathleen met me back at the hotel at 6:00. We went down to the lobby to meet everybody from the conference who was staying at our hotel so we could walk over to the Black Heads Hall for a reception. It featured the all-women's choir from the National Library – they were wonderful and entertained us with 7-8 songs before turning us loose on the munchies. The wine was good and we both had an enjoyable time. We were still hungry after the event ended so we had a late diner at an Estonian restaurant (Kakdse Notsa Korts) that was wonderful!

24 May 2011 – Tuesday

In Tallin

Breakfast in our hotel was nice – lots of variety and served in the basement. We ate with one of Kathleen's fellow conferees (Wilma from the Netherlands) who recommended a trip to the National Art Museum. It was an easy tram-ride but I got tired of waiting for the #1 or #3 to make an appearance (there were plenty of #4's) so I walked the 30 minute route instead.

Although the museum is new and impressive, I find art boring and so I did not spend much time there. It was interesting seeing the impact of Soviet influence on the style of paintings that were created during the occupation.

Saw the Presidents residence. There was none of the US-style security. I think I could have walked in the front door! Took a lot of pictures of the palace built for Catherine the Great behind it.

By this time I was beat so I caught the tram back to the hotel for a bit of a rest, then headed back out into the Old Town and, like a moth to a bright light, climbed to the top of the tower in the town hall on the market square. Quite a view!

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Took a leisurely stroll along the perimeter of the city wall trying to find interesting things to photograph until it was time to head back to the hotel to meet Kathleen.

We were both hungry (I'd had no lunch!) and tired so we had an early and delicious German meal at the restaurant in our hotel before calling it a night.

25 May 2011 – Wednesday

In Tallin & Helsinki

Another cool and cloudy day. Kathleen went to the last day of her conference. I took advantage of having Wi-Fi and caught up on email and DGS website stuff.

Given the weather and my tired legs I decided to spend the day riding the trams to the edge of the line and back to get a better overview of the city.

Met Kathleen at our hotel at 3:00 and took the tram (what else?) to the ferry terminal and are now back on our way to Helsinki.

The buffet on the boat was kind of a disappointment in that there was not a lot of variety. But it included wine that was pretty decent.

We decided to walk to the hotel rather than mess with the trams. It was a pleasant enough evening for a walk and didn't have much trouble finding the hotel.

Not so with the elevator... the hotel was like others we have encountered in Scandinavia in that the lobby was on the 6th floor. The door to the elevators was like a closet door. We found it eventually, rode it to the 6th floor and stupidly stood there waiting for the door to open itself. We probably would be there still if a woman from the reception desk hadn't come to our rescue by opening the door for us.

The room was small with no frills but functional. The lamp over my bed (we have twin beds) was not plugged in – to do that required me to run the cord across the entry to the room to plug in into the extension cord. The shower was one of those weird tubs with a shower head on hose that forces you to sit in the tub to use it. But for all that it was comfortable, the windows opened so we could have fresh air, and quiet so we slept well.

26 May 2011 – Thursday

In Helsinki

Our low-cost (for Helsinki) hotel did not include breakfast, so we checked out and walked to the boat terminal where we were able to store our luggage in a locker for 4 Euro's.

Decided to try the tram instead of walking to the terminal. Got on the 3T (I had determined that was the correct one before we left home) but quickly realized that it was going in the opposite direction, got off, walked back to our starting point and caught the 3B.

We walked through the market by the harbor but could not agree on anything to eat so went to the nearby indoor market and ate there.

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Both markets (indoor & out) sold a variety of food and other things – it was fascinating to walk around and look.

We decided to take Rick Steves advice and rode the 3T tram for its hour-long circuit of downtown. It did give us a nice overview of the city.

We spent a while wandering around Helsinki's largest department store looking at shoes (which we did not buy) for next week's cruise from Montreal. Kathleen did buy a beautiful scarf.

We had a small, late lunch at a restaurant Kathleen remembered from our last visit – a beautiful steel and glass structure not far from the harbor.

By that time, we were able to board our boat to St. Petersburg, so we walked back to the terminal, claimed out bags, checked in and stood with the ever-growing and increasingly warmer crowd of fellow travelers to board the ship.

Once on board we found our room (small, no window, functional) and the outdoor bar at the back of the boat. We snagged a table in a corner out of the wind and enjoyed several bottles of white wine and a can of nuts waiting for our 7:00 pm departures.

The ship was kind of a disappointment. It had a buffet, an ala-carte restaurant, a hamburger/hot dog snack bar, a casino, a night club and a bar. If you didn't want to gamble or dance there wasn't much to or anyplace to go. And there was no ATM and no Wi-Fi!

We had booked the St. Petersburg part of the trip on-line using a travel agent in Stockholm and were a little unclear on what to do next. The shore excursion information desk opened after we departed Helsinki, so we went there to get more information on what to do when we reached St. Petersburg... and didn't get any. They had no idea what we were talking about and offered no help whatsoever. Apparently the competition on the internet is cutting into their business and they are not going to waste a second of their time helping anybody who does not book through them.

It tried 3 different times to try and piece together what was going to happen but came away each time knowing less that I did when I approached the desk.

Kathleen got angry, then despondent, then cried, finally revealing to me that she was also suffering extreme back pain which was not being relieved by any of the medications she had. We finally arrived at a feasible plan of action to follow when we arrived in St. Petersburg (take the bus to our hotel and call Sargeeta in Stockholm). Feeling better, but not really hungry, we dined at the snack bar (I had a hot dog, Kathleen had a hamburger) and then went to bed.

The boat had loud music playing over the PA system outside our room. Then later that night our neighbors came back and had a loud, lengthy party in their room so neither of us slept very well that night.

27 May 2011 – Friday

In St. Petersburg

We slept too late to have breakfast (didn't even have coffee!) and queued up with seemingly half of the ship's passengers in the area of the boat where we were to disembark. It was very hot and crowded and

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got even more so as the other half of the ship's passengers arrived and slowly pushed their way past us towards the still closed doors.

Our arrival time came and went... more people pushed around and behind us. It got hotter. Time passed.

Finally, 25 minutes late, the door opened, and people slowly exited the boat. When we finally reached the door ourselves part of the problem became apparent: we had to walk down (with our luggage) a long (the equivalent of 2-3 stories) flight of stairs to the dock below us. A splendid band on the dock played stirring Monty Python reminiscent music for us.

The airport-like walkway we should have been using taunted us all about 50 feet further down the dock. This was a brand-new port and apparently somebody measured the ship (or the dock) incorrectly, so it was not usable.

We cleared customs and entered the terminal and stopped to ask one of the St. Peters Line agents who was greeting us if he knew what we were supposed to do: He was great! He whipped out his cell phone, made a call or two, escorted us to the exit of the arrival area and pointed towards a group of tour guides.

As we approached, we saw a woman holding a sign that said "Mr & Mrs Hanson", and that was how we first met our tour guide, Julie.

Kathleen had remembered overnight reading something about being met by our guide but it seemed so foreign to us we never imagined that that was literally what was going to happen.

But happen it did. She led us out to our car (a Mercedes Benz), introduced our driver (Leonard) and they both took us on a private, whirl-wind tour of St. Petersburg. We saw a dazzling parade of palaces, churches and statues, interspaced with a visit to a very nice gift shop. There we were greeted by a young woman who, it turned out, was our personal shopping assistant. Kathleen obliged her and purchased a doll and several other things.

Julie and Leonard then dropped us off at our hotel with a promise to return the next day at 9:15 for our tour of St. Peter & Paul Island and the Hermitage.

Our room was not quite ready, so we left our bags and walked through the nearby farmers market that Julie had recommended to us. It was fascinating but we didn't buy anything to eat there: We ended up eating at the mall attached to our hotel.

We checked into our room and headed out again to discover the town some more. It was a lovely day so when we encountered a boat tour on the Neva River, we decided it was the perfect way to spend an afternoon in St. Petersburg, then just wandered around the city.

Ended up eating dinner at an Italian restaurant, then finished the evening at the bar in our hotel where we enjoyed the wind and the free wireless internet access.

28 May 2011 – Saturday

In St. Petersburg

We slept well. The breakfast was a very nice buffet (although the wait at the single coffee machine backed things up a bit).

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It was an overcast, rainy day. We were the last to arrive in the lobby and all of our fellow travelers were already on the bus with Vladimir, our new driver. We picked up a few more people at another hotel (there were 12 of us in total) and drove to the St. Peter & Paul Island. Julie is really a pro – she hustled us into the church before the other groups and moved us around ahead of the growing number of other tour groups. It was still raining (lightly) at this point, but not enough to cause a problem.

We then headed to the Hermitage: what a crowded, crazy but beautiful experience that was! It was jam-packed with tourists speaking every imaginable language. We had a wireless receiver with an earpiece tied to Julie, which was a great help (unless you stood too near the talkative Spanish-speaking leader of the group behind us who was on the same frequency!).

It was an amazingly beautiful collection of art (only about 10% of the collection is actually on display!). Kathleen was in heaven. All the pictures looked the same to me.

We stopped at another store for a while. Not as up-scale as the one we visited yesterday, but still full of enticing things.

The group broke up for the day at this point. We spent an hour or more eating hot dogs and standing with a crowd along the bank of the Neva River waiting for some kind of parade of old steam powered boats to occur. It finally did happen but was not worth the wait.

The rain had passed, and it turned out to be a lovely afternoon when we walked back towards our hotel. The boat 'event' was part of the city's celebration of its 308th anniversary. The square behind the Hermitage had been closed off and there was a celebration going on. The events were kind of strange... we watched a very bizarre play/modern dance involving a very angry woman leading a man with a noose around his neck around for a while before deciding that it was even more boring than watching old steamboats, so we move on.

There were musicians and other activities that did not engage us so we left.

The main street leading back to our hotel had been blocked off. At every other cross street there was a small stage with entertainment of some kind, and even more to do at the numerous parks that lined the route.

By this point we were exhausted and planned to eat and catch up on email at the hotel bar but learned that this was not possible due to a private party. So, after complaining to the help desk clerk, we set out again to find something to eat. We settled on a nice Russian restaurant with outdoor seating that quite pleasant.

Kathleen had discussed her back problem with Julie who strongly advised her to not seek medical help while we were in Russia.

29 May 2011 – Sunday

In St. Petersburg

Got up, packed, and had breakfast before checking out and joining our happy little group for a trip to Pushkin, one of the Romanoff's summer palaces, which is located some distance to the southwest of St. Petersburg.

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What a place! I liked it even more than the Hermitage (although it was just about as crowded!), mainly because most of the beauty was the building itself. The simple fact that it exists at all is remarkable. It was totally destroyed during World War II and has since been restored. Simply amazing.

Julie spoke about the war as we rode the van back to St. Petersburg, and she showed us where the German had been halted during the siege of the city. That was a gruesome time and apparently just about every family that survived was deeply impacted by it.

We finished our tour with a nice lunch at a Russian restaurant for a meal that included champagne and vodka (yuk!). Kathleen did not want to risk insulting Jolie, so she drank mine too.

Then our time in Russia was at an end. Julie and Vladimar drove us back to the boat terminal where, after a 30-minute wait, we queued in the ticket line to get our boarding documents, passed through the questionable “security” and boarded the boat.

We once again headed to the bar at the back of the boat and toasted the memory of our visit and waited for the boat to depart.

We refrained from eating nuts this time and had a very leisurely and enjoyable dinner at a table by a window, watching the shore slip by before reaching open water.

Had a carbon copy of our previous room but slept much better.

30 May 2011 – Monday

In Helsinki

Back in Helsinki again, for a while. We didn't want to spend all morning at the airport so we checked out bags at the boat terminal again and walked around in the drizzle/rain for several hours before re-claiming our bags, riding the tram to the train station to catch the Fin Air bus to the airport for our long flight home.

We had the world's most expensive hamburger at the airport before boarding a 767 (exit row bulkhead seats with no legroom!) and flying 8 ½ hours to Chicago. We had about 3 hours to kill there before catching the plane to Dallas – got home about 10:30 pm, just about 24 hours after we woke up in Helsinki.

Part II

02 June 2011 – Thursday

In Dallas and Montreal

After just 2 days at home (and at work) we are off again! Have an afternoon flight to Montreal which was nice as it gave us some extra time to catch our breath!

It was enough time for Kathleen to visit her chiropractor... that seems to have done a lot to relieve her back pain.

The flight was uneventful – a 737, so you know who had the middle seat! Arrival was simple – walked out of the terminal, caught the #747 bus and 30 minutes later we were walking the few blocks to our hotel.

After checking in we got directions to an area of town to eat and set out to see what we could find.

It was the area near the University, so there were lots of students out and about. We also saw a lot of street people – not that they bothered us, but we were both struck by how many people we saw who were seriously down and out.

Had a nice Italian dinner and walked back to the hotel for a well deserved good night sleep.

03 June 2011 – Friday

In Montreal

A few words about the hotel... Our room is a small suite (not as grand as it sounds!) with a small kitchen area. Its windows open, and it is relatively quiet, so we enjoyed a cool nightly rest.

The day was brilliantly beautiful, cool and sunny. The breakfast was included and great for me but a little on the lean side for Kathleen (no cheese!). We spent some time back in the room plotting where wanted to go, and then we went.

It turns out that Kathleen's family lived and worked all over the old town area. We had addresses from the old city directory and happily chased all over the place, photographing buildings we found. It wasn't until we talked to someone in the Archive Museum late in the afternoon that we discovered that the addresses in the city were completely re-numbered in the early 1900's.

We spent about an hour in the City Hall Archives researching but just did not have enough time to make much progress.

We limped to one of the outdoor restaurants, on the square below the City Hall, where we rested, enjoyed some wine, watched the entertainment on the square and eventually had dinner.

Walking back, we took the scenic route back towards the University. We came across the annual Twilight bike ride – obviously a very popular event judging by the number of participants.

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04 June 2011 – Saturday

In Montreal

Spent a lot of time over breakfast figuring out as closely as we could where Kathleen's relatives lived and worked (we could narrow it down to 1-2 blocks) and headed northeast to see where her GGGrandfather lived. We knew the 2 blocks it had to be. While we were walking the street Kathleen explained to a man out in front of his house why we were taking pictures. He invited us in and showed us the deed and other records he had for his house that traced it back to when it was built. He was very nice to us!

Saw the site here he went to school (since torn down) and the street where he worked (near McGill University).

Had a fun lunch in China Town at a buffet – it is quite a large area.

We had to be at the boat dock by 3:00 so we headed back to the hotel, collected our luggage, then took a cab rather than dragging the baggage all that way. Turned out to be a good idea – it would have been a very long walk!

Turns out that all of the flooding that is going on has raised the river level so much that our boat cannot sail past Quebec so we were bussed to it instead (3 hours).

I used the bus ride to catch up on this journal from Europe to the start of this trip so the time passed quickly. We were seated several rows behind the kind of person we dreaded being stuck with for a week... silly questions and an obnoxious, loud laugh. Ugh!

Arrived in Quebec and were on-board in plenty of time for our 8:00 seating for dinner. Our room was everything we hoped it would be and more: It has a desk/seating area and a marvelous outside deck with two chairs.

Our dinner was equally a pleasant discovery. Apparently our Travelocity Agent followed through with her promise to contact Holland America for us because we have a table for 2 (#72) for our dinners this entire week.

The service we are getting is wonderful but takes a little getting used to. Everywhere we turn there seems to be a friendly, smiling, helpful person ready to direct us to wherever we are trying to go to or get us whatever we want.

Before dinner we went to the outdoor Lido deck and sat at the bar near the pool and had some wine and took in the fact that we were actually beginning our cruise experience.

Dinner was very enjoyable – three courses plus dessert served on German China by Widi, our Indonesian waiter and Marlin, our wine steward.

05 June 2011 – Sunday

In Quebec

We slept well: the beds were comfortable and the room was quiet. We went to the buffet on the Lido deck – what a spread! Just about everything you could want, and more.

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After breakfast we went ashore to re-discover Quebec. There is no free internet access on the boat! It was available in the terminal, so we paused briefly with our fellow frugal internet junkies and sent a few quick emails from our iPhones.

Funny how things change. I was less impressed by the city than I remember being the first time I was here. I'm not exactly sure: It is a beautiful city, and the weather was great (cool and partly overcast). Maybe it was because of my recent memories of Tellin, St. Petersburg, and maybe even Montreal are so fresh in my mind?

We ended up back near the Hotel Frontenac and had lunch (Duck for me!) at a fine sidewalk-overlooking restaurant and watched the many people walk by in both directions while we enjoyed our drinks after we had finished eating.

Then it was back to the ship for our 4:15 safety drill. Feeling much safer afterwards we bought a bottle of wine and took it back to our room and sat on our private balcony, enjoying the fresh air, the view, the wine, and each other's company. We departed Quebec shortly before 5:00 pm and began our long trip to Boston.

Dinner was (again) enjoyable. We are very glad we have the late (8:00 pm) seating: it seems to fit our rhythm well.

Finished the night again in our room, capping the day off with wine left over from dinner.

06 June 2011 – Monday

In Quebec

We lost an hour overnight as we sailed into the Atlantic time zone. Slept well and late (for Kathleen!) again. The day is cool and was foggy: we could not see anything but water and grey.

Breakfast at the buffet again, then took part in the 10:00 tour of the ship's kitchen, which was really impressive. The quality of the food is quite good.

Thought we found a place with free Wi-Fi, but not to be. They have Wi-Fi, but not for free. So, we put on our walking shoes and braved the cool breeze and walked around the 6th deck for a mile since we will be sailing all day and will not be tramping around shore today. We then came back to our room for awhile as the fog began to dissipate a bit.

Kathleen had a massage and pedicure scheduled for the afternoon as part of her birthday present to herself, so we frittered away the day pleasantly with her taking an occasional break from her indulgences.

For dinner we upscaled a bit and ate in a more upscale restaurant (the Pinnacle Gril) for which we paid a bit more, but I think it was well worth it – the food was much better than the very good restaurant we have been (and will again) enjoying. My steak was outstanding!

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07 June 2011 – Tuesday

In Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

Woke up to cool, cloudy weather in Charlottetown. Thoroughly enjoyed breakfast before setting out to see the sights. Stopped off in the terminal again to take advantage of the free Wi-Fi accompanied by the singing/tapdancing mother/daughter duo on the nearby stage.

Found a cathedral ([St. Dunstan's Basilica](#)) that had striking stained glass windows and a lot more. The downtown was very... everyday. Pretty, with a lot of potential, but nothing to make you say “wow!”.

Finished the day on our balcony watching the city slip away into the distance. The surrounding islands were beautiful to watch as we sailed by.

It got really foggy later. After dinner we bundled up and sat on the balcony outside our room again until the cold finally drove us back inside.

08 June 2011 – Wednesday

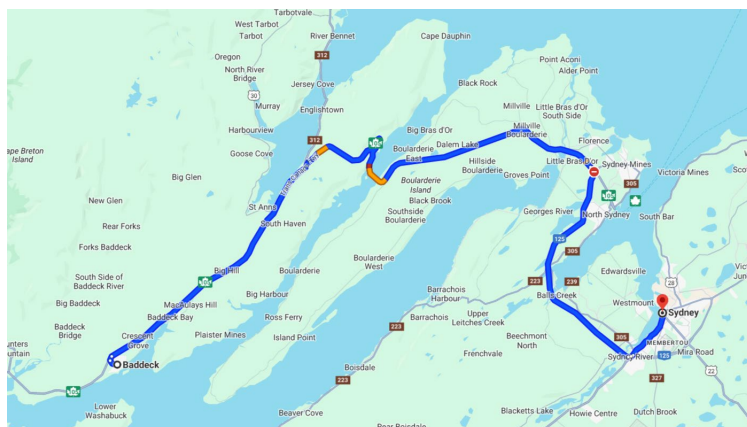
In Sidney, Nova Scotia

It was another cloudy, cool day that threatened rain. After breakfast we walked into town to try to find some better walking shoes for Kathleen, who has been suffering terribly (but bravely!) with blisters. We did find a store that sole Clarks and other quality shoes and found a pair that will (we hope!) alleviate her suffering.

We took our one and only organized tour for this trip. Caught our bus at 11:20 for the Alexander Graham Bell museum in the town of Baddeck, located some distance (it was a 50 minute ride) to the West of Sidney. Linda (our tour guide) entertained us with stories and toffee on the way.

The museum was very enjoyable, providing a lot of insight into the genius of Bell's mind. He was active in many areas besides telephony/telegraph which came as a surprise to me. I had no idea that he was responsible for the first airplane flight in Canada or aware about his work with hydrofoils.

The scenery between Sidney and Baddock was surprisingly beautiful. We got back to the boat just in time to board.



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We were starving and went directly to the Lido deck where we enjoyed a late lunch and watched the boat slip away from shore.

We passed the time until dinner reading and enjoying a few glasses of wine. I picked up a new book in Montreal on Canada's role in WWII Atlantic Convoys. Quite interesting, and appropriate considering the waters we are now sailing through.

Dinner was enjoyable. After we ate we discovered the string quartet that had entertained us for the first part of our dinner and enjoyed them some more over a class of after dinner wine before returning to our comfortable room.

09 June 2011 – Thursday

In Halifax, Nova Scotia

Had quite an enjoyable day today. Breakfast was as good as all of the others have been. Sat with a couple from Harlingen, Texas. He was an ex-Marine and she was an ex-Navy nurse. They met while stationed in Cuba and entered us both with whimsical stories about Cubans having their legs blown off by mines outside the base.

Got directions (#9 bus) to the Farview Lawn Cemetery where most of the bodies (at least those thought to be Protestant!) recovered from the Titanic were buried. Halifax sent two ships to the scene to recover bodies: the remains were buried in three different cemeteries.

We rode back into town and headed next to the Maritime Museum. It was quite interesting – had sections for WWII convoys, the Titanic, and much more.

Finished up with a quick visit to the Immigration Museum near the boat. The guide we had had himself come through the center in 1951. He offered some great insight into what it was like to be one of the many people processed there.

Canada apparently had a large influx of immigrants after WWII. We started to watch a movie about the immigrants but had to duck outside after 20 minutes to head for the boat, which boarded at the other end of the building, just a short walk away.

Had skipped lunch again so immediately headed to the Lido deck and had hamburgers and other goodies to eat. Then Kathleen read while I immensely enjoyed the hot tub.

Dinner as good – we both had surf & Turf.

10 June 2011 – Friday

In Bar Harbor, Maine

Finally got a sunny day! There is no boat dock here big enough for our ship, so we had to “tender in”, which means we rode one of the lifeboats to shore. Had to go through Immigration formalities first – a perfunctory look at our passports.

Took a boat tour of the harbor that focused on geography and local marine life with a naturalist which was fascinating. Saw 10-20 Bald Eagles and tons of seals. Had lunch (lobster!) and finished the day ashore with a long walk around the harbor area.

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11 June 2011 – Saturday

In Boston

And just like that our cruise was over. Arrived in downtown Boston on another cloudy, rainy day. Cleared the ship, went to the airport and checked our bags and returned to downtown Boston for a brief and soggy visit of a city that has become quite familiar to us until it was time to head back to the airport for our flight back home.