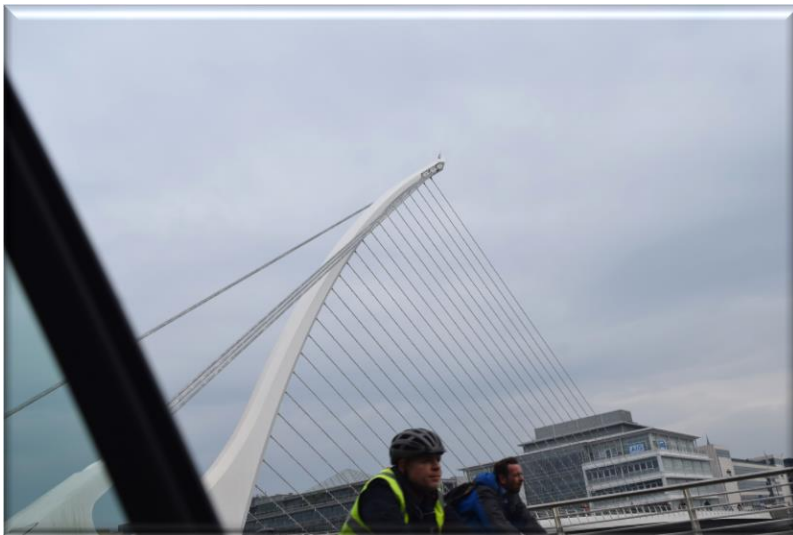


### Blog 3 - April 23, 2019

(Martello Tower - James Joyce; Powerscourt Estate and Waterfall, Glendalough)

Met our guide Alan at 9:00 A.M. His vehicle was a very clean, modern taxi rather than a limo or van because, as he told us, with only 2 guests using the taxi enabled him to drive in the bus lanes, thus avoiding traffic tie ups. It was a brilliant choice as we quickly were able to get out of Dublin at a very busy time of the morning. Also important because with him only hired for a 6 hour tour we didn't want to waste time in traffic,

He took us on a very scenic ride towards our destinations today and he provided us with lots of interesting information about Ireland. The travel guides are very history knowledgeable, and loyal to their country and the commentary was interesting and at times quite funny as Alan interspersed little stories.

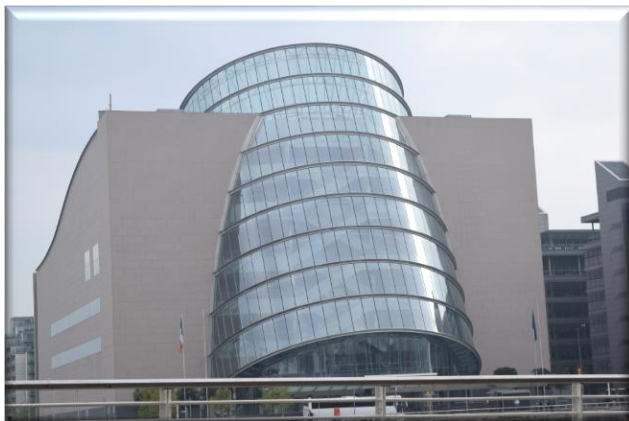


Along the River Liffey, he pointed out a replica of the coffin ships that carried many of the immigrants to North America in order to avoid the famine. (The Jeanie Johnston).

We also had a glimpse of the Samuel Beckett Bridge, which was shaped like a harp. Alan's commentary along the route covered some of the historical context that we had heard on our walking tour yesterday about the various struggles

Ireland endured under English rule.

- David O'Connor the first Catholic elected to parliament
- Restrictions placed on Catholics - no right to vote, not allowed to attend Trinity College (only changed 50 years ago)
- Very discriminatory- a constant struggle by the Catholics for basic human rights.



Our guide also pointed out a few interesting buildings. This particular building is the Dublin Convention Centre, affectionately known as the Dyson building. Can u tell why?

He also stopped a couple of times for some photo opportunities as we made our way to our first destination. The scenery along the way was stunning even though the day was cloudy.

I took lots of photos while driving through Dublin and will put links to them once I sort through them at home.



This photo is in front of one of the nicest yacht clubs just south of the city of Dublin. The Royal Irish Yacht Club. Beautiful and so many beautiful yachts.

Our first destination today was to the Martello Tower where James Joyce, the author of Ulysses, Finnigan's Wake and many others, stayed for 6 days.

It was actually an

interesting stop, and the lady who took us on the tour of the tower was very informative and funny. She explained that the first chapter of Ulysses was actual about his time spent in the tower. When we actually got up to the roof she read us the first paragraph of the book and it was amazing to see what his words were saying. One of those “moments”.



We climbed up to the first level which was the actual “living area”. It was very rustic with one bed, a hammock, stove, small bookshelf and a table. Everything has been left as it was except for one addition.

Oliver St. John Gogarty a contemporary of James invited him to visit at the tower. James was only 22 at the time and was working on a poem called “The Holy Office” the content being the berating of all his literary contemporaries in Dublin. Gogarty in the poem was accused of snobbery in the poem and therefore James got a rather chilly welcome when he arrived there.



Thought is that James was only allowed to stay because Gogarty was afraid of what else might be written about him. A few days later they were joined by another lad, Samuel Chenevix Trench.

On the 6th night of James stay there, Trench had a horrific nightmare about a black panther and woke up shooting several bullets into the fire place shouting at the same time, "Leave him to me". He hit one of the cast iron pots off the fireplace and it narrowly miss falling on James head. It is felt that they had probably been enjoying an evening of drinking and lively discussions. Needless to say, they were in their cups by bedtime. Regardless, he scared the daylight out of James who immediately scrambled out of bed and hightailed out of the tower, leaving all his possessions behind.



The one item added to the tower was a black panther that someone found and donated to the tower room.



On the main level we saw some interesting artifacts and possessions of James Joyce. He was a very talented young man, a poet and an accomplished musician. They say that there was nothing that he couldn't do. There was a replica of his burial mask there which was interesting to see.

As I mentioned earlier, we headed up to the rooftop of the tower where we had an amazing view of the surrounding countryside. From here we could see the tiny, but lovely golden sands beach and also the Forty Foot deep natural pool. The guide told us that there is a 93 year old lady who has been swimming in there for years first thing in the morning. A natural Ocean pool where the locals and others come to swim daily because it is believed the waters will increase your longevity. I think the cold water might kill them. We didn't see the old lady but did see some ladies braving the the elements. You do not wade into this water, you just plunged right in.



Lots more dialogue with our driver as we continued our journey, again stopping for photo opportunities. It was interesting following the coastline. A lot of celebrities lived in this area. Mauve Binchey, Enya and Bono. Bono has actually bought a lot of property along the coast to maintain his privacy. He has restored and built lots of buildings which he rents out to his friends. We were going to have coffee at a Cafe where he goes every morning but it was closed.





Our next major destination was Powerscourt Estate. Very impressive. The estate has a massive garden which has been lovingly and meticulously maintained by the generations of family. The garden is considered the third best formal garden in the world. This famous and very rich family have invested millions of dollars over the past 200 years to develop this amazing property.



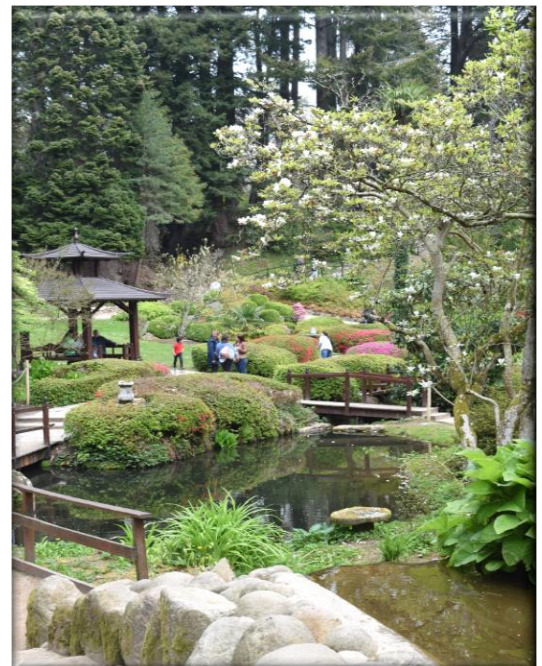
The estate has millions of visitors every year. David Bowie came to the garden wanting to photograph one of the many statues for an album cover, however it was suggested he might want to place a fig in a strategic location on the statue. He decided not to use it. Grace Kelly was said to have danced the night away in the majestic ballroom, and generations of royalty

have also graced its halls.

We took the self guided tour and enjoyed the commentary about each section via the small transistors we are each given as we paid our admission fee. Our favorite area was the Japanese gardens. Beautiful.



It was about a 45 minute walk around for



us but we felt a person could spend a lot more time roaming around.

The spring flowers were finished, and there were signs of the summer flowers getting ready to bloom. The terrain was hard on Kevin as it was quite steep. Though



we thought it was lovely, we also felt that we had seen equally as beautiful gardens on our other travels.

As we left the estate Alan gave us options of the remaining places we could go within the time we had left. Or we could pay for additional time with him at 60 Euros for each additional hour. We decided not to stop for lunch as the time spent eating would be part of the 6-hour tour.

The constant reminder that we only had 6 hours got on my nerves after a while. It put a bit of a tamper on the outing for me.

We opted to visit the Powerscourt Waterfall, the largest in Ireland, and the Glendalough Distillery. The waterfall was magnificent, and I have a beautiful video of it as well as a few photos.

As we headed to Glendalough (A Valley between two lakes), we saw the Sugarloaf mountains part of the Wicklow mountain range, very beautiful scenery.

Alan had never heard of the Glendalough Distillery so he did a bit of Googling to locate it. The drive was beautiful and finding the Distillery an adventure.

it was actually located in an industrial area, two container like store fronts. It was perfect. They don't have a formal Distillery but hope to in about 3 years.

They have two small whiskey stills. Very small production. No public tours.

However, the master Distillery Ciaran Rooney gave us a brief history of the Distillery. One of the major shareholders is the Mark Anthony Group - owner of Mission Hill Winery. This info segued into an interesting conversation about Mission Hill Winery, Mike's Hard Lemonade etc.

We were able to purchase a bottle of Whiskey and Rooney gave Kevin a t-shirt and a souvenir flask. It was a highlight of the day.





Our time had run out. 45 minutes left which was about the length of time to get back to Dublin via the motor way. Still lots of dialogue on the way back. Overall it was a great

Don't think I would go with this company again. Alan was very nice but the constant reference to our limited time made it a rushed day and that was exactly what I didn't want for Kevin. It also made me feel uncomfortable.

We decided to have a bit of a rest before heading out to dinner. Directly across the street was a restaurant Sophia's. I had seen the write up in a magazine and we decided to find it.

Couldn't believe it was right across the street. It is a rooftop restaurant and the view was literally the rooftops of Dublin. Rather cool. It was very large and a bit noisy but still fun and the food was delicious and the prices affordable.

After dinner we decided to take a walk. We were pretty tired when we returned to

around the area. It was a lovely evening for a stroll. the hotel it was a very early bed night.

One more day in Dublin with another excursion tomorrow.

Judi and Kevin

