

Blog 19 - Galway to Belfast - May 9th



A leisurely morning breakfast followed by a brisk walk to the rail station. We are on the trains most of the day. The rails are pretty easy to get around on.

The first leg of our journey took us from Galway to Dublin Hueston station. About a 2.5 hour trip.

The sun was shining brightly though still a bit nippy. This was the last look at our hotel taken as the train slowly left the city of Galway.

The ride was great and I was finally able to get some reading done. I thought I would read lots of books but

for some reason the time didn't really present itself.

Beautiful scenery along the way. I never get tired of the fields of sheep and the bright fields of Canola.

I am going to listen to Johnny Cash's song 40 Shades of Green. He wrote it was here in Ireland and he said it described what he was seeing while he was driving around the country. We certainly have been seeing the same thing so it would be nice to see how he describes this beautiful country.

Once we arrived at the Dublin Heuston Station we caught the Luas to the Connolly St. Station. LUAS is the city rail system. It was pouring in Dublin so we did get a bit wet, as we didn't know we had to wait on the street for the LUAS and we had packed our rain jackets. It is all part of the adventure.

Connolly St station was very old and cold. We had an hour to wait, so hot coffees were a must. I have learned to love flat whites made with coconut milk.



There was another piano at this station. Very colourful. One child was banging the hell out of it, but I guess that is very allowable. He was sure having a lot of fun. What a great way to recycle pianos that people don't want. I wonder if that is what these ones are?

We boarded the train about 1 o'clock and we were amazed at the number of people heading to Belfast. All cars of the train were full. I would never travel without a reserved seat. People can get downright nasty when it comes to securing a seat.

The trip to Belfast is 2.5 hours, so I will sit back and enjoy it.



I happened to look up from my reading and saw an incredibly beautiful sea shore. I have no idea what the area is called but it was just before the first stop on our route which was Drogheda. If you look closely at the photo you can see someone on the beach.

The trip went by quickly. The train was a bit noisy as so many people were talking all at once. Kevin managed to get some sleep but I wasn't able to.

Entering Belfast was a bit disappointing - everything looked run down, garbage piled everywhere and lots of graffiti. Of course, I guess most trains come in the back of a city and you would get the worse views.



Well, at least we made it in one piece and the sun was shining! Our driver wasn't due until 4:00 so we had a 15-minute wait. She arrived right on time and Rosemary was delightful. The drive to the hotel was about 10 minutes and Rosemary gave us a bit of info about where things were in the city. I can say that Belfast is a thriving place with lots of beautiful architecture. Most of it is Victorian architecture Rosemary told us.

We arrived at the Fitzwilliam Hotel where Nigel took our bags, showed us where to register and said he would take the bags up to the room once I gave him the number. A lovely man! When

he came to the room he showed us where everything was located and how to work the various things in the room.



The room is beautiful and located on the 6th floor. There is no view - only the corner rooms have them so we look out onto a building, but you can see the beautiful church spire over the rooftop. The church organ plays a lot and the bells ring on the hour. Beautiful!

We got ourselves settled in. Kevin was resting/sleeping so I did a bit of "wedding" work. Around 7 we headed downstairs. I spoke with Nigel while Kevin was trading in some Euros for British pounds. Nigel booked a dinner reservation for us at an Italian Restaurant just up the street, Fratelli's. He even gave us a voucher for a free

glass of prosecco. Since we had a little over 30 minutes to kill he suggested we stop into "The Crown" for a pre-dinner glass of wine.



He told us that when Harry and Megan visited Belfast this is where they went for a meal and a guinness. It was packed to the gunnels and it was beautiful

inside. We even were lucky enough to get one of the title drinking nooks. If it is fit for a "prince" it is fit for me.

Fratelli's was located about 5 buildings down from The Crown. It was also a lovely place.





The candle in the photo below was started about a year ago and it greets you as you enter the restaurant. It is a piece of art.

We had a delicious dinner, and then a nice walk back to the hotel on a lovely Belfast evening.

The city was just coming alive while we were just winding down. There are times when we do feel our age.

K & J