Ottawa Outbound Journey Diary

**Charlotte Buttin**

May 10, 2019

Despite some very active turbulence, whether we came by American, United, car or train, all nineteen ambassadors arrived in Ottawa safe and sound.

The Welcome Party was at Perkins Restaurant and we enjoyed a great two course dinner accompanied by a humorous presentation on the similarities and differences between the Canadiens and the Yanks. (I can't resist pointing out that though they deny they say "eh" I heard it quite a bit during our fun filled week!)

Early to bed to rest up for the busy upcoming week.

**Ronda Davis**

May 10, 2019

Friday began early with a 6 AM flight.  It was almost fun since we met up with some fellow DM Friendship Force travelers at the airport. Fortunately, the flights were fine, and we arrived in Ottawa to a warm welcome from some members of the Ottawa club.

Mary Marshall, Mike and Ronda Davis were greeted by our home host, Barb Smith.  Barb gave us a wonderful tour of Ottawa that included a stop at Hog’s Back Park to see the historic and beautiful falls.  She shared many stories about the other sights we saw.  It was a great introduction to Ottawa.

Then it was off to our home for the week, where we met Mark, Barb’s husband, and Chantelle, the cat and Visa, the Husky dog.

The Ottawa club planned a welcome dinner at their Perkins, which allows wine unlike their US locations!  There were many introductions and a very funny presentation featuring the differences between the US and Canada.  Bags were distributed filled with fun and useful Canadian items. To end the evening photos were taken of hosts and their guests.

Then to our Canadian home we went for a good night’s sleep!

**Rosemary Fitzjunker**

May 11, 2019

Parliament:

P - - Pretty, Petro Helped

A - - Amazing, Artful

R - - Roseau Center

L - - Long walks, lunch on your own.

I - - Interesting.

M - - Meaningful Mary France and hubby.

E - - Exhausting, Entertained by night hosts.

N - -Nice, No naps.

T - -Tours, tiring.

**Jane Flagler**

May 11, 2019

On a cool and sunny day, we walked to the House of Commons and then to the Senate. In both places we had excellent, knowledgeable guides.

The House of Commons is equivalent to our House of Representatives. Parliament is comprised of these two bodies. The House of Commons and the Senate are no housed in temporary quarters for ten years while the Parliament building is being restored. The Senate has moved to Ottawa’s former train station while their building is being restored. The Senators 105 members are appointed until the age of 5 by the Governor General and are not elected by the people. The seats are calculated by the thirteen regions of the country. In both places we were shown where committees meet and public galleries.

**Nikki Hubbard**

May 12, 2019

Big morning starting with yogurt and raspberries.  We then went to see the tulips which were in varying stages due to the weather. Kathie was interested in the homemade dog biscuits.  We drove around many sites including Little Italy and saw the edge of Chinatown. The government has a large tract of land on which they grow wheat for research using GMO. The fence posts look like pencils as they are pointed, and the point is painted white.

Lunch was in a converted warehouse. We got Brunch Burgers, which were very good but too much to eat all of it. Mothers also got a free bread pudding “cupcake “.

We visited Hogs Back Falls and although the gates were not all open, there was plenty of rushing water!  The breeze was brisk but refreshing.

A visit to a Rexall drugstore and an ATM were interesting experiences. Prices were higher than US, but sale prices helped. LCBO is where you get liquor and some beers, but they also have a separate BEER store. A 6 pack was about the price of a 12 pack at home.

John made 2 delicious salads for the potluck at Betty’s home. One was easy: spinach and mandarin oranges + slivered almonds. Then he simply mixed mayonnaise with the juice from the oranges for the dressing. We got better acquainted with the people there in addition to enjoying appetizers, entrees, and fabulous lemon bars and a fancy souffléé. We stayed until 9:00. By that time, we were all tired but full and happy with the day.

**Pat Headley**

May 12, 2019

Today was a free day with no scheduled activities, but we found plenty to do. Jaap and Maria, our day hosts, picked up Adrienne and John and then came to get me. The first thing we did was to go to Commissioner’s Park where we walked from one end to the other, viewing more than twenty-six tulip beds. Since it was a cool day, some tulips were quite obliging, while others were a bit more reluctant to show their full beauty. Still, we had a great stroll along Dow’s lake, where we met other Friendship Force people, all of us viewing more than a quarter of a million tulips.

Early in our walk we stopped to learn about Princess Juliana, who needed a safe haven during WWII, and was invited to come to Ottawa, Ontario Canada. While she was there awaiting the birth of her daughter, Margriet, the local government designated an area of Civic hospital as Dutch territory, so that the baby could be born on Dutch territory. In gratitude to Ottawa’s generosity, the Dutch send 10,000 mostly pink and purple bulbs, Juliana’s favorite colors, every year commemorating the service they provided to the Queen and to their “enduring friendship.”

After the tulip viewing, we drove into the province of Quebec and to a small village near Gatineau Park. Our goal was to have lunch at a place called Biscotti’s, but it was a small place and 2:30 was the soonest we could get a table; two and a half hours away. They had some really nice-looking pastries on display too. Undaunted, we walked around the corner and found Le Club Chelsea, where three of us had an incredible lunch of cream of mushroom soup. The guys had tacos. After a leisurely lunch and a discussion covering many topics, but solving none of the world’s woes, we drove just down the road to the visitor’s center at Gatineau Park, where we also met other Friendship Force people. We learned all we could at the center, then took a short walk into the woods, identifying a few of the wildflowers growing there.

For the rest of our free day we went back to Ottawa and to the Notre Dame Basilica just to ogle the incredible architecture of the building, followed by a short visit at Rideau Falls – kind of a miniature Niagara. After a brief time at the abode of our home hosts, we were on the road again. Amazingly, Jaap and Maria, despite having spent the entire day with us, managed to go home and put on a splendid dinner, again accompanied by great conversation. Joining us for that meal was FF Ottawa’s president Lynda Heffernan. The last thing we did this day was to go up to the roof of the building my host Rosemary lives in and view the city from there. It was a nice way to end the day, except that 11:00 p.m. also found me writing in my journal.

**Charles Johnson**

May 13, 2019

I love to ride buses, today we are going to ride the bus!

Our trip today is to the Pare Omega. This park is a drive through type park where you get to feed the different type of animals thru the windows of an old school bus. But - - I am getting ahead of myself.

On the way to the park, I got to see some of the most beautiful granite rock formations that I have ever seen. Doubt that any of my associates even looked out of the windows with the amount of conversations that were going on in the bus. The rock formations were just beautiful. It looked to me that they were chain-saw sculptures. There were really breath-taking!

We arrived at the park and went inside and took care of the washroom and lunch was served. After lunch we boarded the school bus and headed into the park.

Some of the animals we saw and fed, were elk, wild boar, wolf.

**Ginny Renda**

May 14, 2019

Tuesday, May 14, began with an unexpected change in our schedule. A visit to Beechwood Cemetery was added to the day’s events. Instead of visiting Rideau Hall in the morning, we went to Beechwood Cemetery for a special ceremony. Before attending the ceremony, we walked around and observed the beautiful 20-foot tree carvings in the cemetery. The artist Peter Van Adrichem, who is the brother of Anna one of the Ottawa Club members, was present to talk to us about how he created these beautiful works of art. This was an unexpected interesting discussion.

The National Cemetery of Canada, Beechwood hosted a Special Canadian Tulip Festival Veterans Day Ceremony to commemorate the liberation of the Netherlands and to celebrate the special bond of friendship symbolized by the gift of tulips. Among those represented at this event to commemorate the liberation of the Netherlands by the Canadian Army during WWII included: the Government of Canada, the Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands, local embassies including the USA, the City of Ottawa, veterans’ groups, and First Nation Representatives. The ceremony was beautifully orchestrated and concluded with the laying of wreaths by governmental officials and military personnel.

After lunch our day host drove some of us around Rockcliff Park where over 70 ambassadors reside including the US Ambassador’s Residence. These homes were quite large and beautiful inside and outside.

Next, we visited the stables of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and we were lucky to observe a practice of the Musical Riding Touring Company. Magnificent horses and skilled riders made for an outstanding performance. We also were able to visit the stables after the performance.

Later that afternoon, we visited Rideau Hall which is the official residence and workplace of Canada’s Governor General. The Governor General is the Queen’s representative in Canada. This place began as an 11-room mansion, but subsequent governor generals expanded and improved the original building. Rideau Hall is full of Canadian history and many beautiful works of art. Because of the change in our schedule, this tour at the end of the day was a little rushed but still very interesting.

I ended my day at a small dinner party hosted by Heather Pettipas. We had a wonderful dinner that was prepared at the table on a special grill that cooked beef and chicken on the top of grill, and we put our vegetables on these little trays that slipped into the bottom of the table grill to cook.  I was impressed with this grill and had never seen such a grill. I guess that I just don’t get out enough!

**Mary Marshall**

May 14, 2019

Work up to drizzle and a change to our itinerary in order to be able to go to the National Cemetery for a Ceremony to commemorate the liberation of the Netherlands. We had a slow drive there as one of the bridges that goes across the river was closed due to high water.

There were several dignitaries who spoke briefly and then laid wreathes at graves that represented those who died during WWII.

Many tulips were at the cemetery, the thousands of tulips that are given to Ottawa every year is because the Canadian government housed many of the Netherlands’ royalty, to keep them safe, during WWII. Princess Juliana was about to give birth in January of 1943 in Ottawa, however if she did not give birth on Dutch soil it would mean that the child would not be fully Dutch and would not have a spot in line for the throne. The Canadian government decided to make the Ottawa Civic Hospital extraterritorial, like an embassy, so that the Princess could give birth on Dutch Land. In 1945, when the Netherlands were finally Nazi-free, the Royals returned to their homeland. To show her gratitude Princess Juliana gifted Ottawa 100,000 tulip bulbs that year and have been sending more and more every year since. This year they planted over 1 million Dutch bulbs.

We had a wonderful surprise while visiting the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and were able to see the full practice for the Musical Riding Tour Company. Our hosts were just as excited as we were as some of them had never seen them perform.

**Michael Davis**

May 15, 2019

We woke up to sunshine and clear blue skies. We picked up Polly and drove over the Champlain Bridge on the way through Gatineau to the Museum of History. The architecture of the museum is beautiful, and the views across the river to downtown and Parliament are also lovely, so we headed out in the sunshine to take photos. The building, which was designed by an aboriginal architect, has no corners and is all curves.

We went to the IMAX theater and watched a film about the coast to coast to coast (or C3) venture on an icebreaker. The film included information about First Nations life at some of the stops.

We split up and went our separate ways around the museum. I went to a lot of the museum but could not finish it all before it was time to meet to go to the Aboriginal Experience. The displays at the museum had a lot of information on the First Nations. Canadians had done much the same as the United States had with treaties, separating children and requiring them to go to special schools, and discrimination. There were also similarities with what was done with Japanese people in WWII and with other minorities.

Ronda spent more time in the gift shop but was also very impressed with many of the First Nations artifacts.

We all met to go to the Aboriginal Experience, which was outside the museum. We learned the differences between teepees and wigwams and longhouses, who used them and why, the various groups of the First Nations and a bit about their cultures and ways of living. Then we went into a tent, where the guide and a young woman did two dances each and answered our questions.

We returned to Barb and Mark’s house, rested a bit, and then went to dinner. It was a full day.

**Adrienne Moen**

May 15, 2019

John Tone and I were picked up by our Day Host, President Lynda Hefferman. We drove to Canada’s Museum of History which is in the Province of Quebec, opposed to the Capital city of Ottawa which is in the Province of Ontario. We ambassadors met in the Museum lobby where our Day Coordinator, Barb Smith, reviewed the day’s schedule and offered options at our pleasure. Most of us chose to take advantage of the I-Max, called CINE+, where we viewed an ecologically driven film of a sailing journey from Toronto to Vancouver. The mapped geographical portion of the 45-minute film was the most interesting to me.

Several of us decided to take lunch at this point and then go outside to take some photos before the forecasted rain started. The architecture of the main building and the administrative building were amazing with the terrace holding flags above. Photos definitely didn’t do justice to these beauties.

We returned inside to begin the many rooms and levels of exhibits. The Grand Hall housed the world’s largest collection of totem poles which was amazing since I had seen so many in Vancouver a few years ago. Canada uses the term “First Nation” for their original inhabitants.

The long corridor entrance to many of the galleries was most impressive. The lighting and grandeur created anticipation. This led to a circular entry area with exhibit options. We chose the Canadian timeline history which included man, animals, and plants. We quickly realized through visual and written pieces how all of us in N. America are truly connected in one continent. This was a lesson in how important Friendship Force is with our worldwide understanding and connections. The St. Lawrence Seaway was truly the magnificent artery into the Atlantic and beyond.

We ended our day at the History Museum with an Aboriginal experience out of doors which was quite educational, and beyond, showing various common dwellings for the First Nations people. We then moved into a large tent where we watched several dances, one of which included a costume with many layers of brass rings that contributed greatly to the sound and music. Each dance had a different meaning; thus, giving us an experience such as if we had gone back in time and actually participated. This ended our day together as an Ambassador group.

This evening we took our Host out to dinner with Pat Headley and her Host joining us. We thought we were going to a French restaurant but ended up at a Mediterranean establishment. Duck entrees and paella were enjoyed by all five of us.

I would highly recommend traveling to Canada and learning about their territories and Provinces. It was a wonderful to experience the Capital of Ottawa.

**Elese Johnson**

May 16, 2019

On Thursday, May 16th I took a few pictures from my host, Marion Dunning's patio. The sun was shining and the birds were enjoying the feeder.

We drove to Almonte Ontario where we met with our fellow ambassadors and their day hosts at 9:30 a.m. at the Equator Coffee Roasters.  We divided into two groups and my group started off with our guide, Cathy Reside.

At the Dairy Distillery we sampled the vodka and heard from their employee, Anthony, how it's produced.  Milk permeate is added to water and a little yeast.  It's then heated and goes through a rather lengthy process and filtered 3 times.  The waste is stripped off and a local farmer picks up the waste and feeds it to his cattle to provide them with additional nutrients. The vodka is cooled and charcoal filtered before bottling.

Our next stop was Hummingbird Chocolate.  We sampled a liquid chocolate and both a milk and dark chocolate bar.  Nikki explained how they start with beans that have been harvested, fermented and dried before shipment.  They are roasted here in a machine called a winnow that also removes the hulls.  A conch machine grinds the beans and they stay in the machine for 3 or 4 days before pouring them into molds.

At Crooked Mile Brewing we sampled the beer.  The owner, Nick explained how they add hot water to grains in order to make mash which then produces sugar.  The sugar is rinsed off then hops are added to give the beer its aroma and flavor.  It goes into a fermentation tank and yeast is added.  The process takes 2 weeks.  Many of the ingredients come from the U.K. We purchased fish and chips to enjoy with the beer.  I thought the food was great!

Our last stop on the tour was back at the Equator Coffee Roasters.  Our presenter, Jan explained they are a Fair-Trade Company which means they are attempting to give back to the people who are growing the coffee beans and doing the initial work.  (Those who are not getting their fair share of the final product.)  85% of Equators sales are wholesale and only 15% retail. They roasted 260,000 pounds of coffee last year. Jan said a light roast take 11 minutes, a dark roast 15 minutes and the light roast actually has a bolder flavor. Coffee stays good for 3 months and stays fresher in the bean versus ground.

We were welcomed by Almonte's mayor and enjoyed the rest of the afternoon shopping and sightseeing.  We saw the statue of James Naismith, a former resident who invented the game of basketball. We walked along the waterfalls and enjoyed the beauty of this community.  Several Hallmark Christmas Movies have been filmed here. Marion, her friend, Elaine Bradley and I enjoyed lunch at the Mill Street Crepe Company. A nice stop!

This was the last day of our journey with the Ottawa Friendship Force. We enjoyed a buffet dinner and a video of pictures taken during our week.  It was a wonderful way to end and spend a little extra time with our hosts.

**Lenne Orona**

May 17, 2019

A beautiful breakfast bringing the Journey to an end.  Off for the train.

Bye bye Ottawa

**Sandra Jordan**

May 17, 2019

Thursday’s trip to Almonte; on the way we passed a field w/many young lambs before coming to an Ottawa Emergency Services Unit; my host, retired police force, told me it was CISS—an intelligence gathering unit much like our FBI.  It had double fencing with notices posted on it regarding no photographs.

We drove to Montreal Friday. There was much construction, detours, road closures, and even a protest march going in as we arrived in Montreal. ?????The hotel was sure we had no reservation at first.  Then a policeman had us move the car before we had all of this straightened out.

We drove to Montreal Friday and found hotel and arranged parking offsite.  Elese and I took a walk and ended up going to a jazz concert at Madison de Jazz de Monte where we enjoyed not only the meal and music but people watching!