

Maritime Trip Day 05, August 27, 2010 10 degrees C (51 degrees F) and sunny

We were up early, again, to catch the Grayline bus into downtown Ottawa. We went to line up to watch the changing of the guard up close (including a full dress marching band with bagpipes). We had seen it yesterday from the tour bus but wanted to get some more photos. Sadly, it was cancelled for today so we all agreed to visit the Parliament Building & take the free guided tour. Parliament is not in session until September so we went through security where they "held" our Swiss Army pocket knives until we departed then headed into the House of Commons meeting chambers. We also toured the Senate meeting room and the all wooden library of Parliament. It was all very ornate and formal. We learned a great deal about the government system in Canada. Up in the Peace Tower we watched a ceremony where a soldier turned one page in each of several books that listed all the soldiers who have died while serving their country in various wars. This is done once a day. The tower carillon then played for one hour.

Our next stop was the Basilica of Notre Dame where Mass was being conducted. It is an elaborate and beautiful example of gothic architecture with many marble statues and columns. We stopped by the American Embassy but were told we could only come in if we had a need and an appointment!

We enjoyed High Tea at the elegant Fairmont Chateau Laurier. It was lovely and enjoyed by us all! Shopping in the lobby and a visit to the Post Office ended our time in Ottawa. We closed out the evening with a picnic back at our campers and 3 games of dominoes - Lorene won, again!