

Our Cotswolds break started on Friday 30th June, when the cats, Zubia & Jamina went to the cattery.

I was then able to shampoo the carpets and they had a few days to dry.

On Saturday 1st of July, I picked Mum up at 10.00am and we began our journey to Ross-on-Wye. We had some delay on the motorway due to a car with a broken axle, but other than that, it was an uneventful journey.



The warmest of welcomes greeted us at Merton House Hotel, and 2 lads helped me with unloading the car, and took our cases to our room, while we relaxed,

taking in the stunning views of the Wye Valley from the hotel garden whilst enjoying tea and coffee.

The coach arrived with the other guests at about 4.30, and we enjoyed another round of tea. It was lovely to see (carers) Diane and Yohanna again, and also Ann a lady we had met at Tenby, who booked this trip on our recommendation.



Dinner was at 6.00pm, and we had a choice of 3 starters, 2 main courses and the desert trolley. I had Mushrooms in Garlic Mayonnaise to start with, and Chicken in a Tomato and mushroom sauce for main course and fresh fruit salad to follow. (Mum had



black forest trifle, which she said was lovely, but very rich). *The Dining Room*

The Lounge



In the evening we had a game of bingo, which neither Mum or I like, followed by a hot bed time drink with biscuits. It was only 9.30, but I was more than ready; - I was tired.

Day 2 - Gloucester Cathedral

Today, after a hearty full English breakfast, or parts thereof we visited Gloucester Cathedral to enjoy its spectacular medieval architecture and learn a



little about its history. Gloucester Cathedral, formally the Cathedral Church of St Peter and the Holy and Indivisible Trinity, in Gloucester, stands in the north of the city near the river Severn. It originated with the establishment of a minster, Gloucester Abbey, dedicated to Saint Peter and founded by Osric, King of the Hwicce, in around 679. Osric's foundation came under the control of the Benedictine Order at the beginning of the 11th century and in around 1058, Ealdred, Bishop of Worcester, established a new abbey "a little further from the place where it had stood". The abbey appears not to have been an initial success, by

1072, the number of attendant monks had reduced to two. The present building was begun by Abbott Serlo in about 1089, following a major fire the previous year. Serlo's efforts transformed the abbey's fortunes; rising revenues and royal patronage enabled the construction of a major church. William the Conqueror held his Christmas Court at the chapter house in 1085, at which he ordered the compilation of Domesday Book. In October 1216, Henry III was crowned at the abbey. The cathedral contains the shrine of Edward II, who was murdered at Berkeley Castle nearby.



Mum and I had been before, and she was happy just sitting quietly soaking up its atmosphere. I wandered off to explore the whispering gallery, which I didn't do before. The Whispering Gallery works because of how sound waves bounce around the inside of this curving section of hard wall.

We had plenty of time for a coffee and cake in the high street. Deciding to have a short wander, Mum and I came across a shop

which had been a jeweller and optician. The clock outside had stopped which was a great pity, as underneath it were figures ready to play on the hour.



In the Cathedral square was a rare pillar box dating from the reign of Queen Victoria. I'd seen it before, but it didn't register as rare.



Gloucester was also host to a Steampunk event while we were there. I didn't understand what steampunk was, so I had to look it up. [Steampunk is a



subgenre of science fiction that incorporates retrofuturistic technology and aesthetics inspired by 19th-century industrial steam-powered machinery. Steampunk works are often set in an alternative history of the Victorian era or the American "Wild West", where steam power remains in mainstream use, or in a fantasy world that similarly employs steam power.] It was interesting seeing the costumes. I now understand the wearing of goggles with Victorian

costume! There were people of all ages. It looked good fun. Their event took place over 2 days and included “madcap shenanigans, with music, markets, monster hunts, talks and silliness for all the family”



Returning to the coach at 3.30, we took a short drive through the British countryside and returned to the hotel.

Once back, we enjoyed dinner and entertainment whilst reminiscing about a great first day.

Our entertainer this evening was Trevor Howard, who played a keyboard and sang requests. He did half an hour of Encore's, as Gregory, our tour manager, kept yelling –“ Give the fans what they want”! He was good; an adequate singer, but his personality made up for it.

Day 3 - Tour of the Cotswolds Villages



Day Three began with a visit to the beautiful Bourton on the Water.

There, we skipped the visit to the Motor Museum



as we have been before – several times). I

had secretly arranged with Pete for him & Cheri to come down and surprise Mum, and go out for a fish and chip lunch. I had passed the shop before, and ignored it as it had steps, but Pete knew of a ramped entrance. We were soon sat down in the bay window, and were served very quickly, the fish was huge and was really, really nice. after a 2nd coffee, so we could prolong our chat. After lunch we had plenty of time to browse the shops and take in the sights of one of the most picture-perfect villages. Straddling the River Windrush, Bourton-on-the-water is known for its low bridges and traditional stone houses.

Returning to the hotel, we sat down to home-made lasagne. Fruit juice to start with and fresh fruit for dessert.

Our entertainer for the evening was Richie C, a guitar playing singer, who had a better voice than the previous entertainer, but lacked personality.

Day 4 - Abergavenny

Today, we headed to a local Butterfly Centre, home to hundreds of species. They fluttered around, landing on your head! Mum and I did not go in as we had visited before, and not liked it. We sat chatting to Waheen our driver, who was very nice. The visit was a quick one, and we then took a short trip into Wales and the town of Abergavenny Diane pushed Mum up the hill to the market. They were the first of the group to get there, and I walked back down the hill to see if I could find the other half as some didn't know where they were going.

All caught up, I wandered off to a herbal shop where I bought Mum some aloe vera liquid, in the hopes it will help her very dry skin. (I've seen it work its magic before). I then pushed Mum into Bon Marche for a browse, before going into a charity shop, where she bought a dress.

We met the others in Nichols department store where we were to have our cream tea in the Botanical Cafe. The scones were enormous. I had a lemon muffin as I am dairy free.

Macey pushed Mum back up the hill to the coach, while I walked along side Ann who was using a mobility scooter for the first time and was very nervous. She couldn't talk and squeeze the trigger at the same time, so made slow progress. She was frightened on approaching the road, but I talked her through it, and she did OK



Gregory & Waheen in the cafe

Back at the hotel, we were treated to Roast Lamb, it was gorgeous, it just fell apart. It was served with crispy roast potatoes. Cabbage and cauliflower. I had poached pears for desert.

After our meal, we played a general knowledge quiz with Gregory until our entertainer was ready. (They carry so much equipment).



Andy Harris was good. He played guitar, banjo, and squeeze box. He had a really nice voice too.



There was much audience participation. Diane and Macey were up dancing, Mum swayed her arms in the air to “Sweet Caroline”. It was a very good evening, and a lovely finish to our holiday.



Day 5

Now, all that’s left to do is say farewell to new friends and plan our next “Limitless” adventure. Mum swore it was her last holiday, - but she said that last year!

Ann had booked a Turkey & Tinsel in November, and Mum said she would think about it. It wouldn’t be through “Limitless”, it would be directly with the hotel.

We had also been looking at cruises. It is up to Mum where we go & what we do.

As Pete said, “Make the most of the time you’ve got, and enjoy it”