



↑ "Titanic Belfast"'s bow-like building structures soar into the sky. The facade shimmers in the light like an iceberg.

The "Titanic" returns home

"Titanic Belfast", Northern Ireland

A new visitor center is located on the site where the "Titanic" was once built. The spectacular structure, which shimmers like an iceberg, recounts the story of the legendary ship, vividly portraying the social and economic conditions in Belfast in the early 20th century.

100 years after the disaster in the North Atlantic, the "Titanic" has returned to the city of its birth. The new visitor center, which is reminiscent of both a ship and an iceberg due to its pointed, radiant facade, is located on the site of the Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast, where the art of shipbuilding once reached its pinnacle with the construction of the "Titanic" and its sister ship Olympic. The iconic structure was designed and planned by London-based company CivicArts/Eric R. Kuhne & Associates, with Todd Architects from Belfast responsible for the implementation. It took three years to complete the building – the same amount of time it took to build the "Titanic" itself.

A journey through time

Four building structures that resemble bows soar into the sky and are the same height as the bow of the "Titanic". As a result, the panoramic window on the top floor, where a replica of the legendary Grand Staircase is also located, provides visitors with the same view as back in 1911 when the "Titanic" was launched on the slipway. For the facade, the architects used 3,000 aluminum shards that reflect light coming at it from all angles so that it shimmers like an iceberg in the sun.

"Titanic Belfast" tells the story of the legendary ship across 14,000 square meters spread out over six floors, with nine multi-

media galleries vividly portraying the various stages from its construction through to the sinking and the discovery of the wreck in 1985. Visitors are also treated to some historical background, learning more about the social and economic conditions in Belfast in the early 20th century. The tour of the exhibition ends in the Ocean Exploration Centre.

The architects continued with the ship theme when designing the interior. With an almost scale replica of the Grand Staircase, individual cabins and the large atrium in which steel beams evoke a shipyard and engine room atmosphere, the visitors to the museum are sent on an impressive journey through time. You can even hear the construction noise and smell the stench of the welding work.

"Titanic Quarter"

After the decline of Belfast as a highly productive industrial location in the 1960s and the decades marked by the Troubles, the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 signaled a period of change. Upmarket shopping centers emerged in the city and restaurants revitalized the streetscape. In 2002, the former docklands were re-named "Titanic Quarter". With a multi-purpose sports arena, film studios, the "Gateway" office complex, hotels and the campus of Belfast Metropolitan College, the old waterfront has developed into one of the largest inner-city regeneration projects in Europe. "Titanic Belfast", which exceeded expectations by over 100% by attracting over 800,000 visitors in its first year, appears to be the main highlight for the time being. ←

→ www.titanicbelfast.com

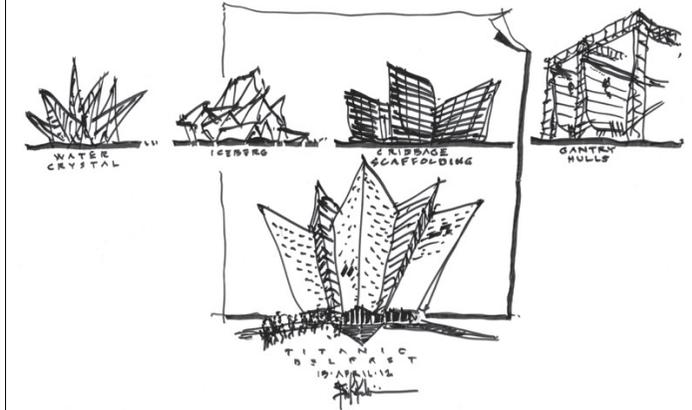
Titanic Belfast, Belfast (UK)

Building owner: Titanic Foundation Ltd, Belfast (UK)
Architects: CivicArts/Eric R. Kuhne & Associates, London (UK); Todd Architects, Belfast (UK)
Opening: 3/2012
Plumber: Harvey Group plc, Belfast (UK)

Geberit know-how

Pluvia roof drainage systems
Mapress copper piping systems
PE piping systems

→ Green building: nominated for BREEAM "Excellent" certification



Interview with architect Angus Waddington (Todd Architects) on the challenge of building "Titanic Belfast":

"The watertight solution we needed"

"Titanic Belfast" was designed to celebrate the great era of shipbuilding in Belfast. Was that overarching narrative mirrored in your practical work on the project?

We were dealing with a fast-tracked project, so there were all sorts of engineering challenges and collaboration issues as we moved along. The actual narrative became our concern when it was time to cooperate with the exhibition designers and their requirements.

What were the challenges you had to meet with regard to sanitary engineering?

The very special geometry of the roofs made water collection a central issue. A suction solution was our first choice, as the anticipated volume of water was immense. Having worked with Geberit back in London, I would not rely on any other technology than Geberit Pluvia.

What convinced you that Geberit Pluvia was also going to meet your expectations for this unique project?

Part of our design brief was to account for an emergency overflow. Geberit and the planners suggested weirs on various levels catering for a calculable amount of water for each of the inlets. That was literally the watertight solution we needed. ←