

Day 63, (Thursday, 11/20/08) At Sea, Stanhope-Jarvis Get Together

This was the second day at sea since leaving Lahaina. Winds and sea were moderate with air temperature in the mid 60s. In the noon navigation report the captain said we had 16,800 feet of water under the keel.

After getting the blog out for yesterday we went to the Queen's Lounge to hear a lecture by Melvyn Foster about Great Ocean Liners. We learned that in the 1800s when many immigrants booked passage on a ship from Europe to North America there was no firm date for leaving or arriving and you had to bring your own food for the 6 to 8 week voyage. The great leap forward took place in the early 1900s when the concept was developed for providing better service for passengers rather than making all decisions in favor of maximum cargo tonnage. We can thank those early entrepreneurs for the luxury we now have on cruise ships. We got a tidbit for use by people interested in trivia. According to Mr. Foster the term "liner" to refer to a passenger ship came from the practice of following a great circle "line" on a map of the ocean when traveling great distances. The great circle line was the shortest distance between two points on the globe and the "liners" stuck to their chosen line to get from point A to point B.

In the afternoon we went to the passenger talent show in the Queen's Lounge. We enjoyed the show and thought the best act was the HAL Chorale led by the Cruise Director, Bruce Scudder. This large group sang a medley of oldies but goodies songs that struck a responsive chord with the audience. The lighting is never good for these photos but here is one we got of the HAL (Holland America Line) Chorale doing their thing.



The highlight of the day was a get-together for drinks in Ray and Ann's stateroom before dinner. They had also invited Alan and Marg, their next door neighbors on the Amsterdam. We had met Alan about a week ago and since then we have talked to him several times when we met around the ship. We enjoy Alan immensely and Marg was also a pleasure to get to know. Marg described to us how her daughter and a friend are following our blog about the 2008 Asia & Australia Voyage. We get a lot of enjoyment whenever we hear reports about people reading and enjoying our blog (**our email address is orlinbarbara at thestansfields.com at=@**). With this friendly news coming in from the home front Ray poured some Champaign for a toast and we got this picture with Alan and Marg.



Marg had planned to do the Sydney Harbour Bridge Climb but she had injured her knee shortly before arriving in Sydney and was not able to make the climb. We did the climb and had shown Ray and Ann the picture previously but since Barbara is a real nut about the Bridge Climb she brought some of our pictures just to show Marg. Next time you'll do it Marg!

Ann has been diligently organizing a photo album of the experiences they have had during the cruise. In addition to the 65 day voyage to Asian and Australian ports, Ray and Ann took land tours to the Great Wall of China and the Angkor Wat ruins in Cambodia. Consequently, they have plenty of photos to organize. Ann broke out her photo album which will make a great memory book for the trip.



There was also banter mainly between Alan and Ray regarding Canadian vs. US culture and customs that provided many good laughs. We calmed things down a bit in order to get this picture of our chatty group.



Too soon it was time for dinner and the party had to end. Fortunately, we have a couple more days to see each other around the Amsterdam. The trouble with these cruises is that they come to an end just when you get to know some of the most interesting people on the ship.