

## **Day 58, (Saturday, 11/15/08) At Sea,**

The day started at sea with temperatures in the high 70s, moderate sea, clear sky, and 16,000 feet of water under the keel. The Amsterdam is cruising at 21 knots which is near the maximum. We have one more day of cruising before reaching Honolulu, Hawaii.

The Holland America Explorations Series of lectures is concentrating on historical events in the Pacific Ocean. Since we are approaching Hawaii the Explorations lecture today by Dr. Jay Wolff was about the events leading up to the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. He told how the US had broken the Japanese secret code and actually knew about the declaration of war by Japan an hour or so before the attack on Pearl Harbor. There was no hint from the Japanese in the declaration of war that an attack was imminent. The Japanese ambassador to the US was supposed to deliver the declaration of war minutes before the actual attack on Pearl Harbor. With this timing they felt it would not be a surprise attack and their honor would be preserved. The Japanese ambassador was delayed in delivering the declaration of war to the US Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, until an hour after the attack. Dr. Wolff said that historians claim Admiral Yamamoto, the man who planned the attack, was very disappointed that the declaration of war was not delivered before the attack on Pearl Harbor. The implication was that Admiral Yamamoto thought the effort put into the war against Japan by the US would have been much less if the declaration of war came before the attack.

It seems highly unlikely that a declaration of war a few minutes before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor would have made any difference in the American effort or the outcome of the war.

Before dinner Ray and Ann came by for drinks and conversation about the cruise and plans for the next few days. We always enjoy getting together with them.

Tomorrow we dock in Honolulu, Hawaii about 7am. In the evening we will be going on a Holland America tour to the Battleship Missouri (BB-63) that is part of the Pearl Harbor Memorial Park. We will be seeing the "Surrender Deck" on the Missouri where General Douglas MacArthur accepted the official surrender of Japan in September 1945. We are looking forward to the next two days in Honolulu.