

Day 39 (Tuesday 10/28/08) At Sea – Indian Ocean

This morning at daybreak it was even cooler than yesterday. Temperatures were in the low 60s and a light rain was falling. We were still sailing south off the coast of Australia toward Fremantle and Perth. In his navigation report Captain van Zaane said we had 1000 feet of water under the keel.

The sun came out about 8am and the decks dried so we could take our walk on the Promenade Deck. It was a little windy but enjoyable. Near the end of the 1 hour hike Ray and Ann began their walk for the day. A Cruise Critic friend, Karen (cruisertwo), was catching up with them when we took this picture.



Normally the deck walkers, without exception, turn left when they come out onto the Promenade Deck and walk in a counterclockwise direction around the ship. Everyone ends up going in the same direction and this protocol makes navigation among the walkers fairly easy, even when people are walking at different speeds. Today, for reasons unknown to us, two ladies walking individually were going in a clockwise direction, against the current, so to speak. The pedestrian traffic was light so it wasn't difficult to dodge them as we passed on each circuit of the ship. At first we thought they were violating some rule posted on the wall. We looked carefully for some sign telling us to walk counterclockwise but never found it. When we finished our walk we stopped by the main office to inquire about any policy about walking direction on the Promenade Deck. We were told that there is no official policy for walking direction. Apparently, most of us just follow our herd instincts and do what we see others do day after day. Those two ladies walking against the flow today were just "marching to a different drummer".

At 10am we went to a lecture about pearls by John Boswell from De Stoop's Australia. The ship's jewelry shop had a huge display of pearls and this was an undisguised attempt to drum up business. However, it was more than just a sales pitch and he gave a lot of interesting information about the technology of growing pearls. He also said the best way to tell a fake pearl from a real pearl was to rub it on your teeth. We had heard this before and wondered if it was true. He said that rubbing a real pearl on your tooth should feel like sandpaper on the tooth while a fake pearl would just slide over the tooth surface without any sensation. He also said that pearls are organic and chemicals can harm them. To minimize damage pearl jewelry should be put on last, after all perfume and other make-up chemicals are applied.

After the talk about pearls, Dr. Jay Wolff gave a lecture about how the British populated Australia with convicts in the late 1700s and early 1800s. He pointed out that the American

Revolution put a stop to Britain dumping criminals in their American colonies and Australia, which had just recently been discovered and claimed by Britain, was their next best choice. Australia was relatively empty and needed development by British citizens. We had heard similar claims in a previous visit to Australia. We suppose that for serious students of American history the sending of British convicts to the American colonies is well known. However, we find it odd that the dumping of convicts in America was never mentioned in our school days American History coverage of the Revolutionary time period. It is likely that the significance of convict traffic to American colonies was not really significant for Americans but it is hyped during visits to Australia for the benefit of American tourists. In addition to the tales of hard times for the early settlers in the late 1700s and early 1800s Dr. Wolff covered the gold rush of the 1850s. Australia was a major gold producer during those times and the experience helped forge the Australian spirit of today.

The size of the ocean rollers got bigger during the day and the ship pitched fairly vigorously but without much rolling. Most people seemed to be taking the rocky conditions in stride. The sky was pleasant with broken clouds while the deep ocean had a dark cobalt blue color. We even got in a little time on our verandah as shown on the right.



Later in the day we got this photo on the left in an attempt to show the size of the rollers we were passing through.

About 4:30 Bob and Esther had us down to their stateroom, along with Joan, for a little "before dinner happy hour". We had this tradition on the 2007 Grand World Voyage and the tradition lives on. For this cruise Bob went over-the-top and brought along his own blender and a



generous supply of Margarita ingredients. We all were looking forward to Bob working his magic and he came through as he always has.



Inevitably time for dinner rolled around and all of us happy campers tramped down to the dining room.

Tomorrow we dock in Fremantle, Australia where we have signed up for a tour called, "Perth and Fremantle Highlights". These three days at sea have been a good rest period and we are ready to hit the tourist trail again.