

Day 8 (Saturday, 9/27/08) At Sea, Deck Walk, Russian Bazaar, Silk, Ray & Ann:

The sea remained rough this morning but the ship was riding more smoothly than it did yesterday. The temperature was a reasonable 55 F and winds across the Promenade Deck had abated somewhat so we resumed our 1 hour hike routine. At our fitness center in Oak Ridge we have recently started doing some exercises to improve balance. Barbara pointed out that this morning we got more than our share of balance exercising as we staggered around the Promenade deck. On a sad note we saw two black sea birds that had taken refuge on the Amsterdam. One had died and this one was obviously very weak.



The Russian Bazaar: On deck 5 the Signature Shop was open for business with a huge display of Russian craftwork. The primary items were wood carvings of Father Christmas, jeweled eggs, and the nested wooden dolls known as Matryoshkas.



The last minute cancelation of our visit to the Russian port of Petropavlovsk probably threw a kink in the

marketing plans for these Russian goods but the Amsterdam Signature shop staff was doing their best to display and sell the attractive items. Later we saw that Evelyn and Jack will be taking some of these Russian treasures home with them.



Silk Fabrics: In the afternoon, Anna Smith gave a lecture on the history and styles of textiles made of silk. The information she had was particularly useful to shoppers who would soon be in major cities of Japan, China and Thailand. After her lecture there was an enthusiastic crowd of people who gathered around her table that was laden with different silk fabrics. Anna is the lady in the white with her back to the camera. Barbara is checking out some silk options for our quilting friend, Jan, in Sisters, Oregon.



Ray & Ann, Doug & Joyce: Tonight the dress for dinner was optional formal or casual with the theme of Black and White. Barbara and I dressed and went to Ray and Ann's stateroom for drinks before dinner. Doug and Joyce were also there and we got acquainted with them. It turned out that Doug and Joyce live in the Puget Sound area on Orcas Island where Ray and Ann used to live. The island has a small population and the two couples had known of each other but had never met face to face until this cruise. In the lively discussion that followed we enjoyed the description of life on Orcas Island and some of the colorful characters in their community. We took a picture of our gathering. Unfortunately the picture was slightly blurred, probably because of vibration from the rough seas we were plowing through.



On the way to the dining room we noticed that as a convenience to passengers afflicted with sea sickness, "barf" bags, like the air sickness bags provided on airplanes, were strategically placed at each elevator. Fortunately, no one we knew had yet needed one of these emergency measures.



At dinner we couldn't resist another opportunity to get a picture while dressed in our black and white outfits.