

Day 3 (Sun 9/21/08) At Sea, Walking the Deck, Church, Ray and Ann: During the night we set the clocks back one hour. We are about at latitude 50 degrees north and the distance between time zones is not as large as it is further south. Consequently as the ship travels 400 to 500 miles per day west we cover an entire time zone and each night the clocks must be set back. Today we are 5 hours behind the Eastern Time Zone. Our miraculous weather continues with calm sea and temperatures in the mid 50s. We had braced ourselves for storms and sea sickness as we crossed the northern Pacific Ocean but so far the weather has been most enjoyable.

We started the day with about eight laps around the Promenade Deck which amounts to a little over 2 miles. We were joined by other early risers and a few of the crew who were washing the deck to remove salt deposits from the ocean spray.



At 10am we went to the Wajang Theater where the Rev. Dick Huber conducted the non-denominational Protestant services. Rev. Huber is not a member of the ship's staff but regularly goes on Holland America cruises and serves as the Protestant Chaplain during that time. Clergy from the other denominations have similar arrangements and are on board. He used the time to introduce himself on this first Sunday of the cruise and delivered a very simple but affective inspirational message. Rev. Huber said that he subscribed to the "KISS" philosophy (KeeP It Simple Stupid) with regard to theology. He told the story of a noted minister speaking in one of the large and famous churches in New York City some time ago. When it came time for him to speak the minister simply got up and sang the children's Sunday School song "Jesus Loves Me" and then he sat down. Rev. Huber then had us sing the song Jesus Loves Me and the service was brought to a close. That said it all.

Brad and Phyllis are our long time friends who live in Atlanta. When we signed up for this cruise they had told us that Phyllis' sister Ann and her husband Ray, whom we had never met, would also be on the Amsterdam with us. We wanted to meet them but had not yet made the connection. In the afternoon, the phone in our cabin rang and it was Ann who suggested meeting in the Crow's Nest Lounge for drinks before the early dinner seating. That sounded great to us and we quickly agreed. After hanging up the phone we realized that no unique signal had been suggested to help identify us. Slightly before the appointed time we arrived in the Crow's Nest dressed in our finery for the formal evening. After we inquired unsuccessfully with one likely looking couple, Ray and Ann came in and we made the connection. We had a delightful time getting acquainted. Brad and Phyllis had often mentioned Ray and Ann so we felt we already knew them. This

was a great opportunity to fill in some details of their lives and share experiences we have had with people we all knew. An obliging steward took this picture of us before we adjourned for the dinner hour.



At our dinner table we joined Joan, Bob and Esther. This was the first formal evening of the cruise and everyone looked super. As the saying goes, "We clean up pretty good."



There are going to be eleven more of these formal evenings during the 65 day cruise. We will be putting lots of mileage on these clothes that we otherwise seldom use.

After a wonderful dinner of steak and lobster we were entertained by the singers and dancers of the Amsterdam. They were wearing costumes designed by Bob Mackie. We enjoyed the costumes as much as the wonderful performance. And so ends another day for us. We will gain another hour as we turn our clocks back once more.