

Day 28 August 21, At Sea, Mariner Lunch, Michael Millwood, Lobster Thermidor

We were at sea on our way to Qaqortoq, Greenland. In these northern waters the dawn comes about 4am. After a fairly bumpy night we got into more calm sea, temperature of about 55°F and occasional sunshine.

Mariner Luncheon:

The Holland America Line has a Mariner Society for customers who sail often with them. Because we have accumulated a sufficient number of cruising days with Holland America we are members of the society and were invited to a Mariner's Society brunch at 11am in the Rotterdam Dining Room. We took a table with 5 other passengers whom we had not met. Here is a picture of our table partners for the occasion. From left to right are, Hermes, Joan, Bill, Yvette, Barbara, and Orlin.



Captain van Schoonhoven gave a brief speech expressing appreciation for the loyalty of the assembled passengers to the Holland America Line. Then he turned the ceremony over to the Hotel Manager, Firmin van Walle who gave a toast wishing for everyone to have enough time to enjoy all the good things in life.

We had a great lunch and enjoyed the conversation with our table mates. It turned out that we had cruised with Bill and Joan as well as Yvette on the 2008 Grand Voyage to Asia and Australia. As is often the case, just because of the low odds of meeting and remembering people passing in the hallways, we had not met on that cruise. These little get togethers like today provide an opportunity for more lasting memories of people you meet.

Michael Millwood:

Michael Millwood gave lectures today on (1) Eric the Red and (2) Leif Ericson as part of the Explorer Series sponsored by Holland America Line.

Eric the Red: His first subject was Eric the Red who made his contributions to history in the 980 to 1000 AD time period. A quick summary of his life was that he had a short temper and killed a man in Norway when they had a dispute over a property boundary. The society was reasonably sophisticated and didn't condone killing so Eric was banned from Norway. He migrated to Iceland and started a new life. Again he got into a dispute and killed another man. Again he was banned from his community. He went to Greenland with his wife. Again he killed and was banished. This time he just sailed

further up the west coast of Greenland and started a new settlement where he spent the rest of his life.

Leif Ericson: Leif Ericson was the second son of Eric the Red. Leif Ericson's main claim to fame is that he led a group of Vikings from Greenland to Newfoundland and points south. They were always short of wood for building boats, houses and other essentials in Greenland where only shrubs like willows grew. They had heard of ample forests in Newfoundland so Leif led his group there and started a settlement in the area of Newfoundland near where St. Anthony is located today. The native Indians were hostile to the Vikings and after a few years the settlement was abandoned and the Vikings moved back to Greenland. It was Leif Ericson's settlement in Newfoundland that earned him the credit by some people that he, and not Columbus was first to discover America.

Lobster Thermidor: Tonight at dinner there was lobster thermidor on the menu in the Rotterdam Dining Room. Barbara ordered this tasty dish and enjoyed every bite of it. She insisted on including this picture of her dinner plate in the journal for future reference and also for the more immediate visual pleasure of our foodie friend, Jan.



We continued sailing west during the evening. Tomorrow we cruise through the beautiful Prins Christian Sund on the way to Qaqortoq, Greenland.

Some ominous rumors started circulating about hurricane "Bill" coming up the US East Coast and giving us a problem. Holland America claims they haven't been able to crack the codes for getting satellite news on our TV so we are operating on hearsay at this point. Steve sent a helpful email weather map showing the projected path of "Bill" and recommended that we keep the barf bags handy. The Captain assures us that everything is under control.