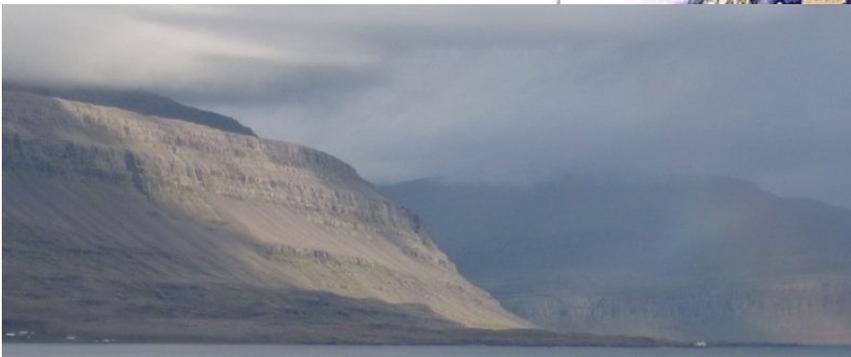
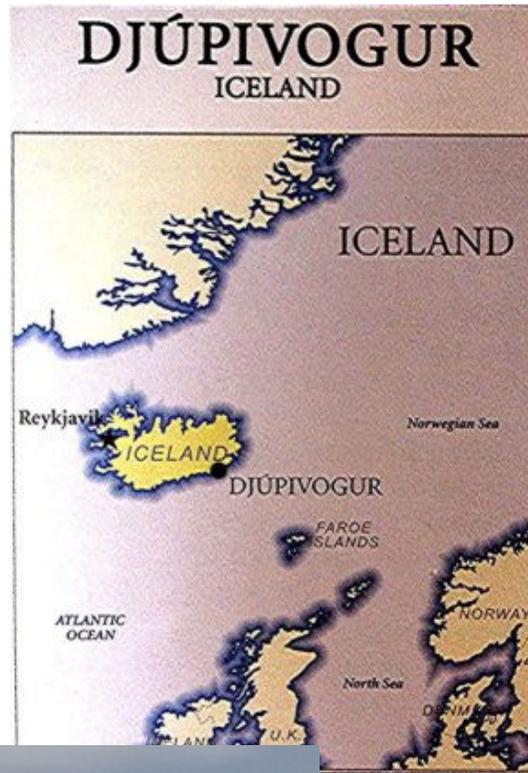


Day 25 Aug. 18 – Djupivogur, Iceland

The day started with a moderate sea and overcast sky as the Maasdam approached the harbor of Djupivogur. The temperature was a cool 50°F. The map below shows Iceland about half way between the Faroe Islands and Greenland with Djupivogur located on the southeast coast of Iceland.

As we entered the broad fjord where Djupivogur is located, we were met with massive and beautiful mountains to the north and a broken rocky coastline to the south. Shown below are some photos of the scene.

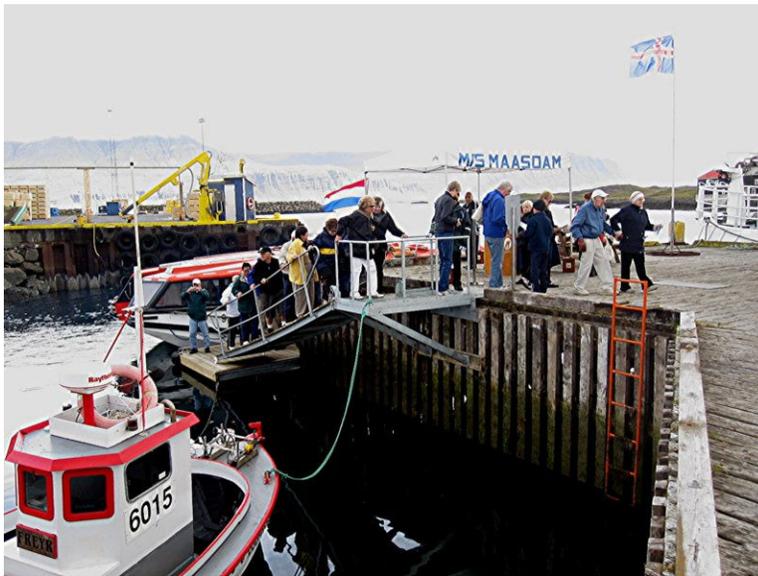




Several farms were visible at the base of the massive mountains. An occasional car or truck could be seen traveling the road that led along the narrow strip of flat land at the waters edge. The following photos show the farms that we saw. We could imagine that sites like these attracted the first Viking settlers.



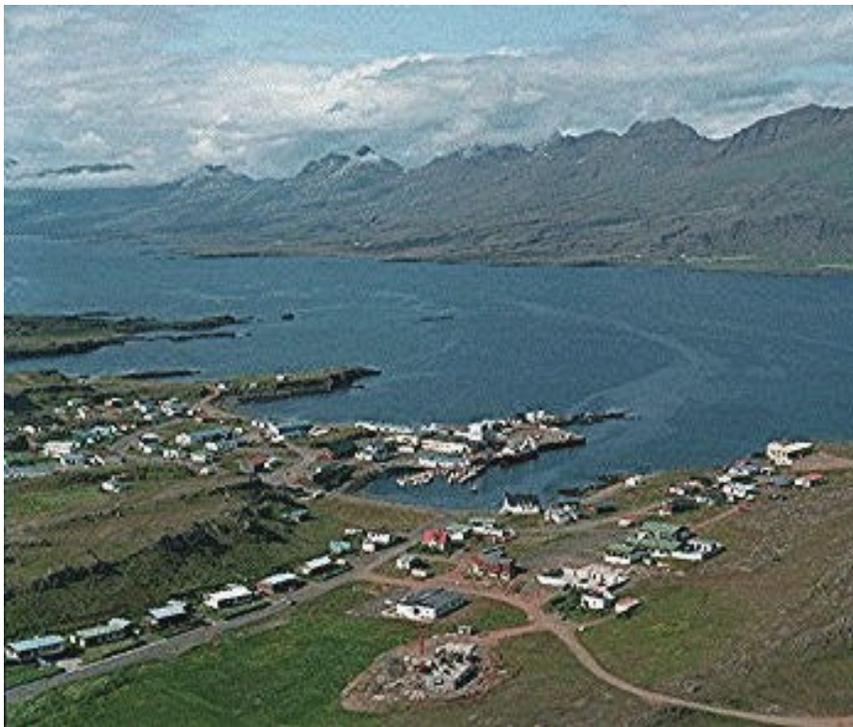
We went up for breakfast in the Lido so that we would be ready to go when the ship was finally anchored and cleared for our visit. Mary, whom we had met early in the cruise, was in the buffet line and we had a nice conversation. It was good to hear that Mary and Bill were having a good time and their kids were able to use our blog to follow the course of the cruise. We held up the buffet line for a few seconds to catch this photo of her on the right.



About 8am the Maasdam was anchored in the outer harbor of Djupivogur and the tender boats had been put in the water. We were glad to see that they were putting at least four boats in the water so that the runs to and from the shore would be frequent. About 9am we boarded a tender boat and made our way to the passenger pier in Djupivogur. Here are the eager Maasdam passengers making their way up the

steep gangway and stepping ashore for a day of exploring this small village. Earlier the cruise director had used the ship's PA system to warn us about the gangway that was steep and not friendly for people who had difficulty walking or were wheelchair bound. Thus, another reason for spending the kid's inheritance for travel while both of us are still fairly mobile.

Here is a map of Djupivogur showing the relatively long boat trip (~15 min.) we had taken to get us from the Maasdam to the passenger landing. Luckily the ride was smooth and comfortable.



We had anticipated a small, uncrowded village and Djupivogur did not disappoint. Here, on the left, is an aerial photo we got off the Internet that gives a good overview of the town. With a little imagination a person can overlay the street map above with the photo and get a reasonable idea of the lay of the land.

On the pier we had been handed a map of Djúpvogur that was more detailed than the one we got on the Maasdam. This new map, shown below, gave an updated view of where the cultural museum, craft center and other tourist sites were located. In addition, the map broke new ground for us by kindly showing where there were “Toilets for guests of ms Maasdam”. Whoever was in charge of the map project was truly an enlightened soul.





The population of Djupivorgur is on the order of 1000 people which is about the number of passengers on the Maasdam. The Maasdam troops were soon spread out and making themselves visible all over Djupivorgur. This photographer from an Icelandic TV station was busy getting some footage for the evening news.

We had been searching for souvenirs of Iceland so we followed the signs to the craft center that had been set up in temporary but very convenient quarters a short distance from the pier. It was in an inflatable tent-like structure shown on the right.



The inventory was primarily some great looking woolen goods but we didn't see anything that struck our fancy.



Near the Craft Center was a rather abstract sculpture on the right in this photo but there was no indication of what the significance was. Of more interest to a lot of people was the lava outcropping behind the sculpture which they could climb and get a better view of the area.

We struck out walking along the road named Hammersminni shown in the southeast corner of the street maps above. The modest houses along the way were neat and regularly spaced along the paved street. Here is the city hospital that was well set back from the street.



The hospital was marked on our map but as we find typical in these Nordic ports there was no sign indicating the purpose of the building. We went to the

entrance, which was locked. Through the window we could see in the foyer some medical related stuff and a sign pointing to the hospital drug store. We assumed that the medical staff only came to the hospital when there was a real medical need.

On the subject of medicine and health we came across evidence that the sewer system here may be a bit more advanced than the



one we described in our stop at Nanortalic, Greenland, on day 7. First of all there were manhole covers in the street as shown on the right. Secondly, by following the trail of manhole covers down to the water's edge Orlin found this gravel mound over a sewage collection (and hopefully treatment) tank with vent pipes as shown on the left. Further evidence of the purpose of the facility was provided by the

toilet paper remains in the nearby grass, probably the result of an overflow at some time.

While not the invisible kind of technology for this essential service that we expect in our US cities, this showed that the people of Djupivogur were willing to start making the necessary community investments for good public health.



Our best craft related find of the day was at a little shop with this pretty little sign in the front yard. The shop was in the back where we found a huge collection of rock and wooden craft items for sale. The proprietor was a very congenial fellow who had taken a day off from his usual job to open the shop for Maasdam customers.

The owner was a real rock hound and had been collecting rocks from around the area for the last 30 years. He had well laid out displays in the yard all around his house and he invited everyone to take a look. This collection of rocks on the right was particularly striking. His shop and rock display



reminded Barbara of her aunt and uncle who were avid rock hounds all their lives.

We looked at all his items and finally settled on a little jasper pendant. We got the customary photo with the artist, Jon Sigurdsson, as shown on the left. (Note that Jon's tee shirt spells the name of the island nation of Iceland the same way the English spell island).

As we left Jon's shop there were plenty of other Maasdam passengers finding it, as shown on the right.



We walked back in to the main part of town and found the building housing the indoor swimming pool. This was one of the few signs in town that included an English version. We didn't have a guide to describe the facility but from other presentations about Iceland we assumed this swimming pool and most other buildings in Djupivogur were heated by thermal energy from the earth.



Surprisingly there was a fairly large hotel in town at the southeast corner of the harbor. It had a large dining room which we assumed was used for bus tour that may come by. Iceland is completely ringed by a paved road so some touring travel is possible. While walking around we struck up a conversation with a man who had flown to Reykjavik by plane from Rotterdam and was in the process of driving a rented car around the Iceland ring road. Djupivogur was one of his stops along the way. Here is a photo of the hotel.



Some people were making their way in a rather uncertain manner down from the popular lava outcropping to the right of the hotel. With baited breath we followed their progress and when it looked like they had made it to safe ground we took this photo below. After learning about the cost of medical evacuation (see Day 24) we had earlier decided not to crawl up the side of this hill.



We now directed our walk to the southwest along a road named Buland in the street maps above. We had been surprised by the vigorous growth of fine grass on the lawns and hillsides around Djupivogur. These two fellows were busy mowing the grass on this public building near the harbor.



Going down Buland Street we came to this pretty little church by the side of the road. The lava hill where we anxiously watched two people totter down a few moments ago could be seen in the background, decorated with the silhouettes of a few standing climbers.



We came to this long stretch of road leading out of town. In the distance was an interesting roof so we decided to make a visit to that site.

The sidewalks stretching into the distance in this photo on the left is a public infrastructure investment that seemed unusual for such a small village.



On the way along the road we snapped this picture of a hammock put up by some homeowner hoping for a sunny warm day.

There was also this road leading to what looked like a more upscale part of town than we had seen before.



Finally we came to the building with the interesting roofline and it turned out to be this beautiful Lutheran church with a bell tower standing in the parking lot.





The pastor had opened the doors to the Maasdam visitors so we took pictures of the beautiful altar and choir loft areas.



Fran, the wife of the protestant pastor on the Maasdam was visiting the church with us and we got into a conversation with her. She had spoken with the pastor of this church and he had said about 90 percent of the people in Iceland were Lutheran. The church in Djupivogur is growing and they had recently moved from a small church we had passed earlier to this larger new one.

Outside the church was a colorful flowerbed that had been planted in a way that spelled "Velkom In" as an invitation to people passing by on the highway.

The highway was the main road that encircles Iceland.



A radar speed warning device was mounted beside this main highway as a friendly aid to traffic approaching Djupivogur from the sparsely populated coast of Iceland. At the mid afternoon time we were there cars were passing about every 2 or 3 minutes.



On the way back in to town we passed by a grocery store / gas station business so we were able to check the local price of gasoline. The regular gas was priced at 189.9 Icelandic Kroner per liter. The conversion rate today was given at \$1USD = 128 Kr so assuming 4 liters per gallon this worked out to about \$6 USD per gallon. There were



plenty of cars in the small village so the price of gasoline has apparently not shut down automobile traffic. We checked out the grocery store and it seemed to be like any small store you might find in the US.

We found this sign and took the opportunity to get photo documentation for the visit of Barbara's library card to Djupivogur, Iceland.

Throughout the village we found many variations for spelling the name but the city logo is clearly visible on the sign so we were satisfied.



It was about time for us to make our way back to the Maasdam for the sail away at 5pm.

We went down towards the passenger pier where some hardy people were having an outdoor snack at the Culture Center Restaurant as shown on the left.

The Maasdam was running several boats during the day as can be seen in this photo showing boats going to and from the ship.



We were glad to see a tender boat waiting for us when we arrived at the pier. The tide had come in so the ramp down to the boat was not nearly as steep as it had been in the morning when we arrived. We got on board and soon we were back on the Maasdam.



The ship got underway about 5:30pm bound for Reykjavik, the capital city of Iceland. We should arrive about 2pm tomorrow and the Maasdam is scheduled to stay docked overnight so we will have a full second day in Reykjavik. We are planning to get out to the famous Blue Lagoon the first day and then take an extended "Golden Circle" tour the second day. We are looking forward to the visit.