

At Sea on the way to Greenland:

We enjoy days at sea, particularly after a series of ports where there has been non-stop touring of new places. When in port the top priority is seeing the sights but at sea it is possible to kickback, check-out the Maasdam facilities, and get to know some of the other passengers.

Crow's Nest Comment: When we boarded the Maasdam in Boston we made a quick tour of the ship and were surprised at how the floor space of the Crow's Nest Lounge was so much smaller than the Crow's Nest Lounge on the sister ship m.s. Amsterdam in 2008. The perimeter windows were the same great size and architectural style but a lot of space had been carved out of the room by putting service and/or cabin rooms of some sort against the back wall. There was still room for activities but it just seemed less spacious than we remembered experiencing on the Amsterdam. In addition, perhaps the ventilation system was not working properly today but the cigarette smoke from the smoking section permeated the entire room so it was not a place in which we wanted to linger. However, in spite of these nit-picky comments, the Maasdam Crow's Nest is a luxurious room that has comfortable lounge seating, bar and sound facilities and it is the center of much social action during a typical day. For example, at the time we visited today there was a Line-Dancing class being conducted on the dance floor, as shown in the photo below.



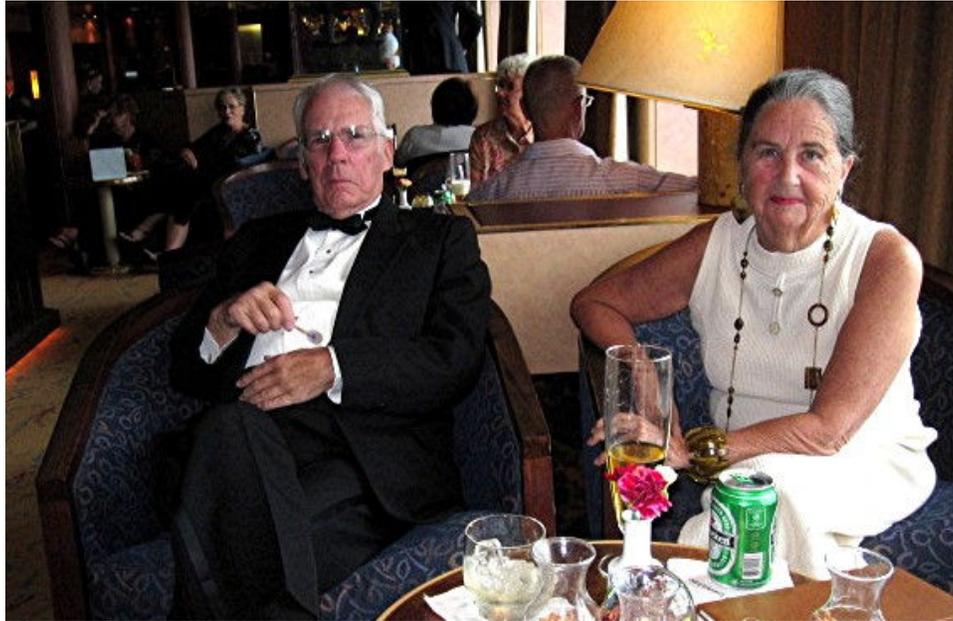
New Time Change Procedure: Today we had an expected time zone change as we head eastward. However, the time change was not conducted in the way we have always experienced. We had advance notice in the daily program and at noon Captain Andre van Schoonhoven got on the loudspeaker and announced that the ship's clocks were all being advanced one hour to 1pm. People usually complain about losing an hour's sleep with the usual on-board time change during the night so this procedure avoided that problem. Since it also, in an instant, moved dinner an hour sooner that had to be a good thing.

Bob Brezindine Entertains: In the afternoon Bob Brezindine, who had performed his amazing card trick act a few nights ago, gave a rather informal show in the Rembrandt Lounge. There were not as many people in the audience as at the evening show so it was possible to be up close as the card tricks were performed. He is an accomplished artist at this line of work and it was a real treat to see what he could do. He started out by showing a U-Tube clip of Ricky J. performing an incredible card throwing trick. Apparently Ricky J. is one of the best card trick people in the business and Bob Brezindine said film clips of his work are available all over the Internet as U-Tube entries. After showing us the Ricky J. stuff Bob reached in to his own bag of tricks. He used people in the audience to add credibility to his act as he did apparently impossible things. The trick we thought most incredible did not involve cards. Bob held rubber bands stretched between the thumb and finger of each hand so that they interlocked in a way that prevented his hands from being separated without pulling the rubber bands off one of his fingers. He would try to move his hands apart and the rubber bands stretched but did not allow separation of his hands. Then he blew gently on the rubber bands and suddenly he could move his hands completely apart with the rubber bands still stretched between thumb and finger. He did it several times and then had a lady from the audience successfully do it while standing close to him. We were all amazed. Here is a photo of Bob on the right as he was performing the rubber band trick.



Ocean Bar Friends: On this cruise the dress is formal for dinner on sea days. We have early seating so about 4:30 we put on our best formal attire and decided to step out to the Ocean Bar for a drink before dinner. We found a table near a friendly couple and struck up a conversation. We were instant friends with Bill and Mary who live in Florida. Bill

had just found a cruise line daily program dated 9 March 2009 in his tuxedo pocket. Orlin had to appreciate someone who uses the same tuxedo jacket wear-and-stash protocol that has worked so well for him over the years. During our conversation they mentioned that they recognized us from pictures they had seen on our blog. Soon it was time to leave for dinner. We took this photo of Bill and Mary to commemorate our new friends and we look forward to seeing them often around the ship.



Formal French Gala Dinner:

The theme for the dinner tonight was “French Gala. There was an ice sculpture of the Eiffel Tower at the entrance to the dining room where we were able to get a picture of us in our formal outfits.



The waiters were decked out in French waiter's costumes, complete with black berets. We all indulged in the delicacies offered on the menu. Barbara particularly wanted our "foodie" friend Jan to see the lobster dish shown in the photo below.



Maasdam Singers and Dancers: After dinner we adjourned to the Rembrandt Lounge where we were entertained by the Singers and Dancers of the Maasdam. They put on a Las Vegas quality singing and dancing act called "Gold" that commemorated award winning songs over the years. The new "Light Board" that had been brought aboard the Maasdam in Red Bay was working perfectly with the exciting stage lighting as far as we could tell.

As mentioned yesterday, the entertainment on the Maasdam has been exceptional. We are looking forward to what lies ahead in the Rembrandt Lounge.

Nanortalik: Tomorrow we anchor in the harbor at Nanortalik, Greenland. We will take tender boats ashore in the morning and start our exploration of this old Viking settlement.