

4/18/07 Day 93 – At Sea - Wednesday, 18 April, 2007: Back on Day 91 which was 16 April there was a significant event that day that was forgotten and not mentioned. The event was a meeting of www.cruise critic.com participants. Dorothy Hennings (Bluewhale) has organized the CruiseCritic meetings throughout the 2007 World Cruise. The meetings have been a real catalyst for initiating friendships and sharing experience that would not have otherwise happened. The main purpose of the meeting on 18 April was to introduce Bob Alspach (RKAcruiser) who joined the Amsterdam World Cruise while we were in Civitavecchia (Rome). Bob introduced himself and mentioned several members of the group with whom he has cruised before. Rosalie (Wander) mentioned how useful the cruise critic group has been for her as a person joining the ship part way through the cruise. The cruise critic group help break through some of the unintentional barriers that form when people form their social groups early in a cruise and then a new person comes along. Rosalie also described a passport mix-up her husband Don had when he left the ship for home in Civitavecchia. He had received Rosalie's passport instead of his own. Luckily he noticed the error while still on the transfer bus and it was possible for the correct passport to be brought out to him. Another serious subject discussed at the meeting was the recent terrorist bombings in Casablanca. Several people gave accounts that emphasized the danger involved. The general feeling was that we should go to some other port and not go to Casablanca. We took a group picture, shown below, that included most of the people who have been attending CruiseCritic meetings here on the Amsterdam. Our leader, Dorothy, is sitting in the middle of the front row wearing a blue blouse and gold necklace.



As mentioned above, a serious topic of concern at the CruiseCritic meeting back on 16 April was the terrorist bombings in Casablanca and our scheduled visit to the port on 18 April. Later there was an announcement by Captain van Zaane that the visit of the Amsterdam to Casablanca had been cancelled because of the terrorist danger and now we were scheduled to stop at the port of Gibraltar instead. The ship's tour staff was able to cancel out all the tours for Casablanca, a presentation about sights to see in Gibraltar was given and by evening on 17 April we were scheduled for tours of Gibraltar. The plan was for the ship to dock in Gibraltar during the night and we would already be there when we got up in the morning. We woke up about 6am on 18 April and it was still dark outside. We could feel that the ship was rocking slightly and apparently still underway. We surmised that the Captain had decided to cruise in circles during the night and wait for daylight before going in to the dock at Gibraltar. We got dressed and after making final preparations for a trip into Gibraltar we went out into the hallway on our way to breakfast. We saw our steward, Bayu who told us that plans had changed. We were not going to Gibraltar today but sailing on to the island of Madeira instead. In the mail slot by our door was a letter from the Captain explaining that the harbor accommodations in Gibraltar were too dangerous for the Amsterdam in view of the high wind and wave conditions that existed during the night. Satisfactory accommodations could not be negotiated. Therefore, he had decided to cancel the visit to Gibraltar and go to Madeira. We would then travel on to the Azores Islands and stop at the previously unscheduled port of Ponta Delgada as a substitute for the canceled port of Casablanca. It was a letdown after we had gotten primed to see Gibraltar but going to Madeira a day early and then on to a new port of call in the Azores quickly got us thinking in the revised schedule mode. Along with the other passengers we rolled with the news and looked forward to a day at sea and the new port of call.

We spent part of the day catching up on putting blog entries together and in the afternoon we went to a party in the stateroom of our neighbors, Carl and Trudy. They were having the event to celebrate their tablemate, John, having his four daughters join him on the World Cruise. They



came aboard the Amsterdam while we were docked in Civitavecchia (Rome). We enjoyed the snacks and drinks while we got acquainted with the new arrivals. Here are a couple pictures we took during the party.

John is surrounded by the ladies in his life. Left to right Susan, Mary, Anna and Sarah.



In the photo on the left are Trudy, Joan, Anna and Barbara.

The ladies clustered around Carl and we took this picture.



Soon it was time for us to adjourn to the dining room for the early seating but the lucky ones with late dinner seating partied on!