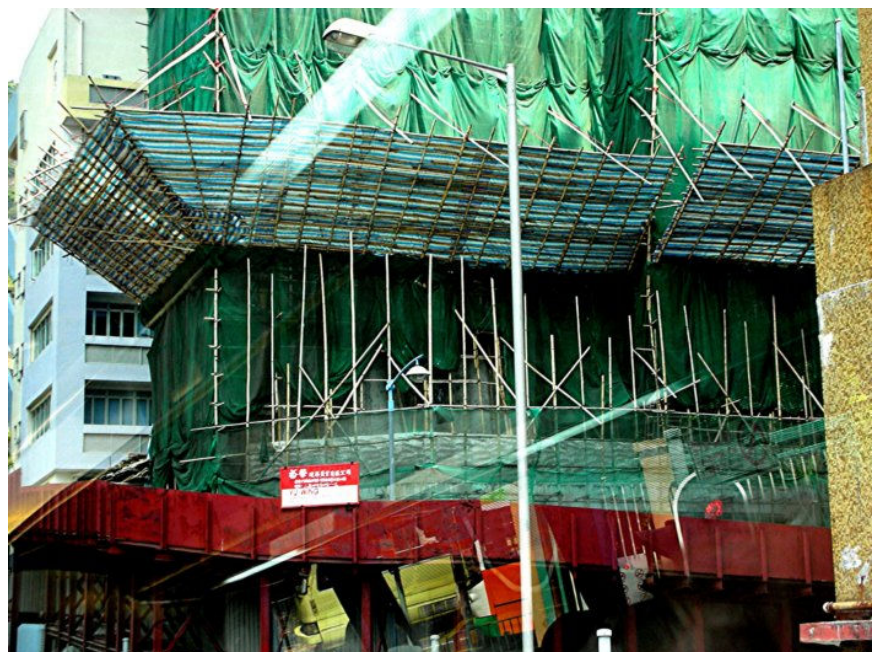


3/7/07 Day 51– At Sea – Wed - 7 March 2007: **Hong Kong add on:** there were a couple pictures we intended to use yesterday in the Hong Kong entry but we forgot about them. One picture was of Barbara showing her Oak Ridge Library card had traveled to Hong Kong.



Here is Barbara with her card at the Kowloon landing for ferry boats. The sign on the building behind Barbara reads, 'The Star Ferry to Hong Kong', and Hong Kong can be seen across the harbor.

The other picture from Hong Kong showed that they are still using bamboo poles lashed together to make up the scaffolding used for even the tallest sky scraper buildings. This stuff was amazing when Orlin first saw it in a 1960 visit to Hong Kong. With all the progress in building technology it is more amazing that the bamboo pole has remained the material of choice for scaffolding in Hong Kong. Here is a picture of bamboo in action on a building.



The scaffolding shown in the picture has been covered with a green plastic screen, probably for safety reasons, but trust us, under the screening is the tried and true bamboo pole.

Okay now on with 8 March and the day at sea after leaving Hong Kong. This was an overcast day at sea with light winds and fairly smooth ocean. We enjoyed the fact that we could sleep in and there was no need to do anything special in the morning.

At noon we got together with Dorothy and George in the La Fontaine Dining Room. Dorothy had arranged for eight www.cruise critic.com message board users to get together as part of an ongoing effort to have us get to know each other better. The cruise critic website was the catalyst that got many of us acquainted by way of the message board and this cruise has been a wonderful opportunity to actually meet face to face. Another reason for the get together was to welcome Rosalie and Don (www.cruise critic.com message board handle – Wander) who had come aboard the Amsterdam in Hong Kong.

We really appreciate the extra effort by Dorothy in constantly working to bring us CruiseCritic people together. The people we have met by way of the CruiseCritic get togethers share our interests and have added to the fun of the cruise. We had a great lunch and managed to get a group picture at the table.



The www.cruise critic.com pals get together for lunch.

Left to Right, Don and Rosalie (Wander), Dorothy (Bluewhale), Orlin and Barbara (TENNcruisers), Anne and Dick (ANSalberg), George (Bluewhale), Karen and Darrel (Cruisertwo)

Later in the day, before dinner, Marvin and Marilyn Onstott, the AAA representatives on board, held a cocktail reception for AAA clients in the Crow's Nest Lounge. Some new people joined the cruise in Sydney and Hong Kong and this was a nice opportunity for us to meet them.

This was a formal dress night for dinner so we were all dressed for the reception. The theme for the day was a celebration of Chinese food and dress so those of us with Chinese style clothing took this opportunity to wear our Chinese clothes. Barbara had bought a blue brocade top in a Chinese style at the night market in Kowloon a few days ago so she put that to good use.

These cruisers look like they are having a good time. Everybody got into the Chinese theme except Orlin. Left to right, Dan and Jean from Nashville, Orlin and Barbara, Ann who is an ex-Knoxville lady.



Bob had a Chinese hat, with pigtail, that he put on for the Chinese night occasion.



The Amsterdam Cruise Director, Bruce, dropped by to pose with Esther, Gayle and Barbara.

Left to right: Esther, Bruce, Gayle, Barbara in their Chinese finery.

At 5:45 pm it was time for the early dinner seating so we left the AAA reception and tramped down to the La Fontaine Restaurant. We were greeted by a magnificent Buddha at the entrance to the dining room.

After dinner we went to the entertainment in the Queen's Lounge. The featured act was called Soul Mystique. This was a costume change extravaganza that seemed like magic. The male dancer would briefly pass a silken



banner over the lady dancer and in the time it took the banner to flow over her she would change into a different costume. They performed the trick in several ways to the applause of the audience. This was at least a Las Vegas quality show. Hope we see them again.

Tomorrow we dock in Nha Trang, Vietnam and take a tour of that city. The ports are going to start coming closer together now so we are gearing ourselves up for a more strenuous effort in the touring department.