

**3/4/13 - Day 57 –Makassar (Ujung Padang), Sulawesi Island, Indonesia:** The Amsterdam arrived about 8am at Ujung Padang which is the port for the large city of Makassar. The location of Makassar on the island of Sulewesi in Indonesia is shown on the map below.



The terminal building had a large sign welcoming us to Makassar so Barbara used this opportunity to document the visit of her library card to this far corner of the world, as shown on the right. There were many people at the open terminal building windows greeting us with energetic waving. Actually, it was more likely they were there to greet family members of the Amsterdam crew who call this city and Sulawesi Island their home.



Another view that we had from the ship was of the nearby mosque, as shown on the right. Islam was adopted by the ruler of this area in 1605 and it is the dominant religion of the people. We would see many mosques of various styles as we toured around the Makassar area today.



We met with Karen (Kween Karen) and the group she had organized to take a private tour of the Makassar area today. As soon as the ship was cleared by immigration officials we left with our group. We noticed in the terminal building that the stairway to the “Waving Gallery” where we had earlier seen our greeters was well marked by the sign shown on the left.

We met our guide Mursalim (call him Salim) on the pier and he led us to his van, shown below.



There were only 11 of us so we fit comfortably into Salim’s van. Our driver, Ahmad, quickly got us going as we swung into the crowded streets of Makassar.

Our first destination was the Bulusaraung National Park which was 25 miles north of Makassar and about a 45 minute drive.



After inching along in city traffic for 15 minutes we passed through a toll booth and swung onto an open freeway where we were able to make good speed for 10 or 15 miles. Along the way we were busy taking pictures of the passing scenes, as shown below.

As we had seen in Bali, here in Makassar the motorcycle is a favorite mode of



transportation. On the freeway there was a bridge where motorcycles were restricted to a narrow lane so they formed a long line as shown on the right.



There were many signs of poverty and lack of basic maintenance of buildings as we rode along. The following photos are examples.



Makassar is located on a broad flat plain so as we passed into the city outskirts we began to see more open farmland and a few animals grazing, as shown on the right and below.



This photo of a pasture scene on the right shows a range of mountains in the distance rising up out of the flat land. A river cascading out of those mountains forms the famous Bantimurung Waterfall which is part of the Bulusaraung National Park. A view of the waterfall was our primary goal in the park today.





Here and there were examples of well kept homes of more affluent people.



However, the majority of homes showed that the occupants existed under pretty marginal conditions. It

was a Monday and apparently that is a popular time for people to wash their clothes. Many homes had clothes hung out to dry in the warm sun.





We arrived at the gate of the Bulusaraung National Park and were greeted by a slightly damaged butterfly symbol of the park, as shown on the right. There are caves and abundant foliage around the park which makes a good habitat for butterflies. A local claim to fame is that the naturalist Alfred Wallace collected butterfly specimens here in the mid 1800s. Looking beyond the gate structure, a statue of a monkey can be seen. Some parks in this part of the world have bands of wild monkeys that harass the tourists but we didn't see any today.

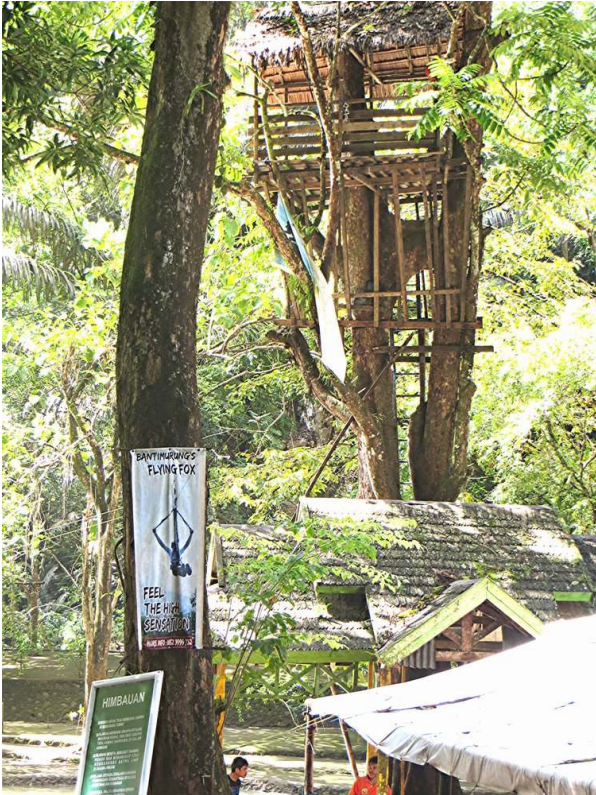


We drove into the park and Salim paid for our admission near the entrance to the Bantimurung Waterfall.



As we walked toward the falls we passed an old mosque that is shown on the right. It had been used for hundreds of years. Salim said that a new mosque was now built and took the place of this old one.



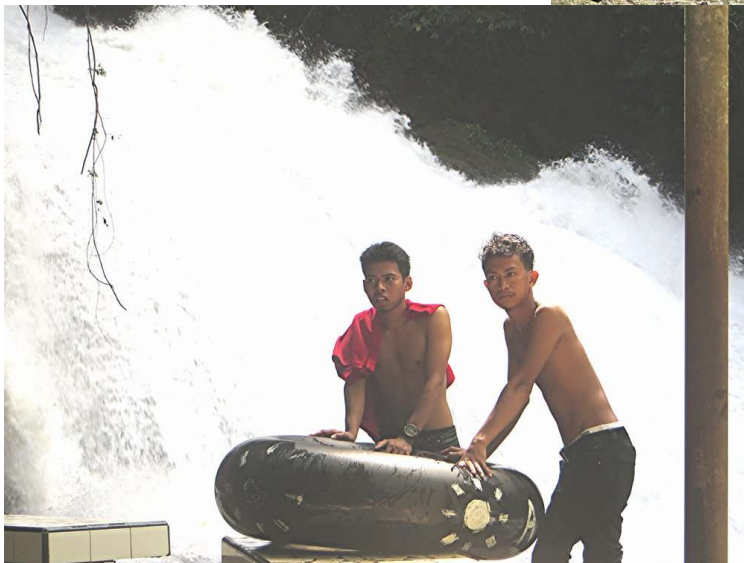


Another interesting feature near the walkway was the “Flying Fox Ride” shown on the left. This was a type of “Zip Line” ride that was available to people looking for a thrill.

We walked a short distance and arrived at the Bantimurung Waterfall that is shown in the photo below. It was not a high water fall and more like a large river rapid but there was an impressive volume of water rushing down the drop-off into the valley below.

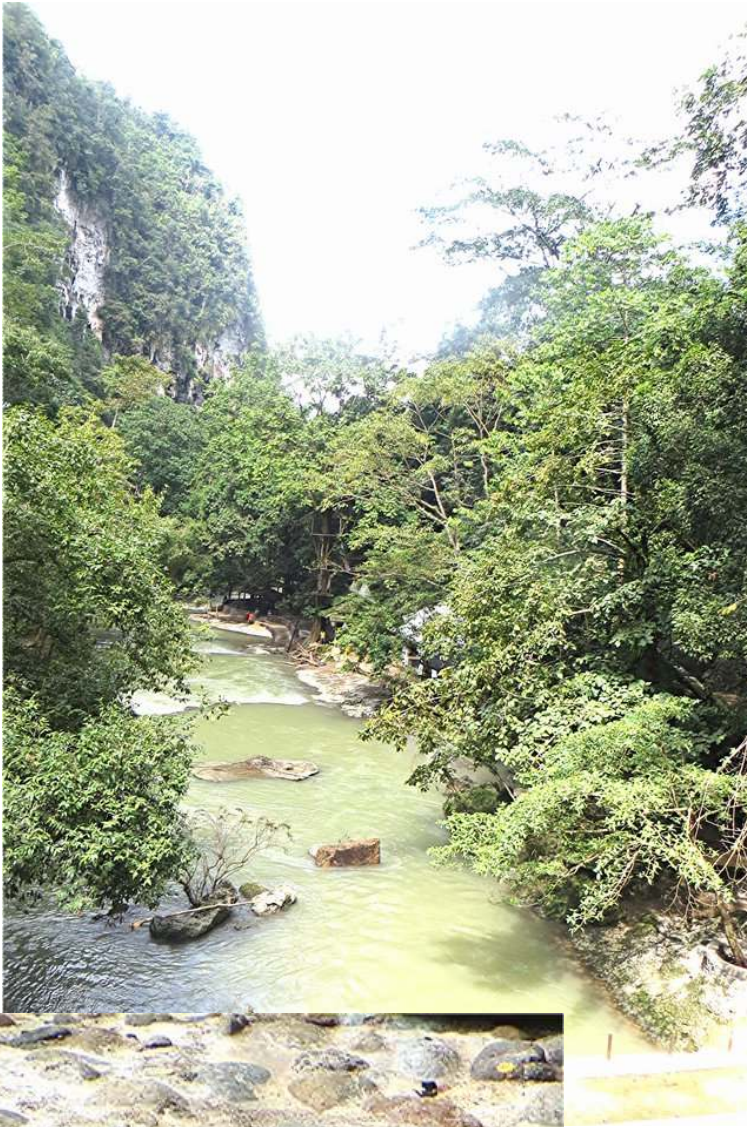
Note the inner tubes on the far bank of the river below the falls. Apparently it is possible to ride one of the inner tubes down the rapids and along the more gentle river below.

The park was nearly empty while we were there but they must have periods of time when crowds come in large numbers for the Flying Fox Ride and other excitement like riding an inner tube on the rapids of the river.



These boys on the left were poised with an inner tube about half way up the falls. Unfortunately they didn't launch while we were there.





This photo on the left shows the river valley below the falls.

We were able to get photographs of a couple butterflies as shown below.



These weren't prize winning specimens but we were lucky to get these.



In the souvenir shops that we passed on the way back to the van there were many vendors selling carefully preserved beautiful butterflies for a few dollars.



A group of teen aged girls saw us and somehow knew we were foreigners. They had a camera and were laughing and giggling as one of the braver ladies asked if they could have their picture taken with Karen and Barbara. We assumed the girls were at least nominally of the Muslim faith. After all the negative press about

Muslim attitudes towards people of Western nations, it was a pleasure to see what appeared to be a genuine desire to make friendly contact.



Before returning to the van we had an opportunity to use the toilet facilities provided in the brightly painted building shown on the right. There were two women toilets and only one toilet for the men. Someone in our group commented on this gender bias and thought the US could learn something here. However, the praise stopped when they discovered the facilities consisted essentially of a bucket on a wet concrete floor.

And toilet paper? Are you kidding me? The first rule of the veteran traveler – bring your own!



We left Bulusaraung National Park and headed for our next destination which was the Paotere Traditional Harbor in Makassar. Along the way we took pictures of the various mosques we sighted along the highway and in the city of Makassar. Some of the photos are shown below.







We noted that the mosques had beautiful architecture and were perfectly maintained, unlike most of the homes and business buildings that we saw today.

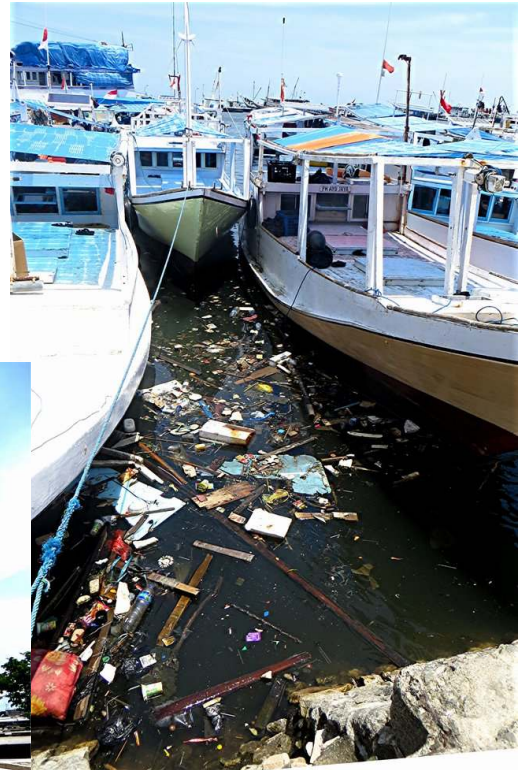
After about a 45 minute ride back into Makassar we arrived at the traditional harbor called Paotere. The people of the Indonesian islands have a long history of maritime commerce. They developed the Phinisi boat design that is still used by some of the fishermen and freight

hauling people of Makassar. We got out of the van and walked along the wharf to get a closer look at the boats.





Sanitation was not a strong feature of the harbor.



These boats on the left and below have the soaring prow of the traditional Phinisi cargo schooner.





At the harbor we huddled with Salim (in dark blue shirt) and decided that it was time for lunch. He had made arrangements for lunch at the Ujung Pandang Restaurant in Makassar.



We got back into the van and worked our way through the congested streets of Makassar in the direction of our lunch destination.



We noted that human powered taxis are numerous in Makassar. These bicycle rickshaws are called “becaks”. There was even a man powered cargo vehicle in the Traditional Harbor area.





We arrived at the RM Ujung Pandang restaurant where we were to have lunch. The table was all set up for us with a lazy Susan type center piece loaded with Indonesian food, as shown below.



We helped ourselves to the feast and had a lovely time. They had ice cold beer that really hit the spot on this hot, humid day.



Soon we had devoured everything (except maybe the super-hot spicy garnishes in the four little white bowls) and left a terrible mess.



We left the restaurant well satisfied and with a great Indonesian meal to remember.

We boarded our van and headed for the Somba Opu Fort on the outskirts of Makassar. In negotiating the city streets we drove by a gas station and got this fuzzy photo of the posted gas prices. The premium gasoline was selling for 4500 rupiah per liter in Makassar. That was the same price that we saw in Bali several days ago. We concluded that Indonesia probably has some kind of price control for gasoline that fixes the price across the hundreds of islands that make up the nation. The 4500 rupiah per liter is equivalent to \$0.47 USD per liter at current exchange rates. Assuming 4 liters per gallon this works out to about \$1.88 USD per gallon. Not a bad price to pay.







On the way to Somba Opu we passed the nearby University of Indonesia. It was housed in a sparkling green building that contrasted with the general run down appearance of most of the city.

We were soon at the Somba Opu Fort which was built in 1525 by the Sultan of Gowa IX. For a long time the place was the center of trade for spices that were sought by traders from Asia, Indonesia and Europe. Over the centuries the fort fell into disuse and deteriorated. Interest in the fort picked up in the 1980s and it was restored to its current condition in 1990.

Much of the grounds of the old fort appear rather unkept with goats and cows using it for pasture. However, there is a museum there that features a nicely reconstructed traditional house used by the Toraja and Bugis people who were important ethnic groups in the pre-colonial and early Dutch colonial period (mid 1500s to 1800s). It is built up on stilts and has a magnificent upswept roof line as shown in the picture on the right.







The remains of the old fort are minimal. They are mainly a brick wall about 50 feet thick and 20 feet high, as shown in the picture on the left.

We completed our tour of Somba Opu Fort and went to our last stop of the day at Fort Rotterdam, near the harbor where the Amsterdam was docked.

Fort Rotterdam was in much better condition than the more ancient Fort Somba Opu we had just visited. We walked into the fort through the imposing gate shown on the right.





Our guide, Salim, explained that Fort Rotterdam was built by the Dutch during the 1670s.



It has suffered a lot of damage over the years but has now been carefully restored. He then showed us a brick ramp up to the top of the fort wall. It was the only remaining original material in the fort. It had a well worn appearance as shown on the left.

We walked up the ramp and then proceeded to gingerly walk around the top of the wall for a short distance, as shown below.



During World War II the Japanese occupiers of Indonesia kept prisoners of war within the high walls of Fort Rotterdam. There was no evidence of that sad time that we could see. We fairly quickly got an appreciation for the massive nature of the fort walls and descended into the large courtyard which contained nicely finished administrative buildings, the Conservatory of Dance and Music and the Ujung Pandang State Museum. We spent some time walking around the grounds

We had heard that school kids come to Fort Rotterdam to practice their English on the tourists. At one point Barbara approached a group of smiling school girls. Barbara asked if she could have her picture taken with them. They happily accommodated the request as shown on the right. We thought that these ladies were more polished than the ones we met at the waterfall earlier. Note the lady second from the left with her right leg cocked at a provocative angle and the lady on the right giving us a “thumbs up”. They departed, laughing and talking amongst themselves.



We left Fort Rotterdam and returned to the Amsterdam where we said our goodbyes to Salim. He had done a great job of showing us Makassar and got us back to the Amsterdam well before departure time. We browsed around some vendor stalls where they were selling fruit and other foods.



Then we saw a group of little kids playing in some rubble nearby. They appeared happy and were eager to engage with us so we took their picture.

As we were walking through the passenger terminal we saw our dining room steward, Asep, in the waiting room with his family. His home was in Makassar and he had been able to spend a few hours with them while



the ship was in port. We didn't want to intrude too much into the little time he had left with them but we did stop to meet his family and chat for a moment. As we left we were able to get a picture of his young family, and his wife's mother on the right, as they prepared to say goodbye to Asep. He will be returning to Makassar on vacation in May.

After a sweaty day of touring we happily returned to the cool air conditioned comfort of the Amsterdam. While we were at dinner, at about 5:30, the Amsterdam got underway and sailed away from Makassar headed for the city of Puerto Princesa on the island of Palawan in the Philippines. It will take two days at sea to get there and we should arrive on March 7.