

2/5/13 - Day 30 – Arrive Auckland, New Zealand: Our day started at sea, about 12 hours of sailing time out of Auckland, New Zealand. We were scheduled to arrive in Auckland about 6pm this evening. Because of bad sea conditions back on January 31 the Amsterdam passed by the island of Roratonga without the scheduled stop. Because of that change in plans we were arriving in Auckland about 12 hours ahead of the original itinerary schedule. That was fine with us because Auckland is a beautiful city with lots to see and do.

We tried to take a quick walk around the deck but the wind was blowing so hard we soon gave up on that idea. However, while out on deck we were able to see an unusual and beautiful cloud formation. Yesterday the Captain said that a weather front was approaching from the northwest and we suspected a clash of fronts may have produced this scene. Some friends have expressed interest in cloud formation and nomenclature so we snapped a picture which is shown on the right. We are pretty good at classifying clouds as scattered or broken but these looked different. There is probably a correct term but for the time being we'll just call it "partially overcast" and discuss technical details later when we get back home.



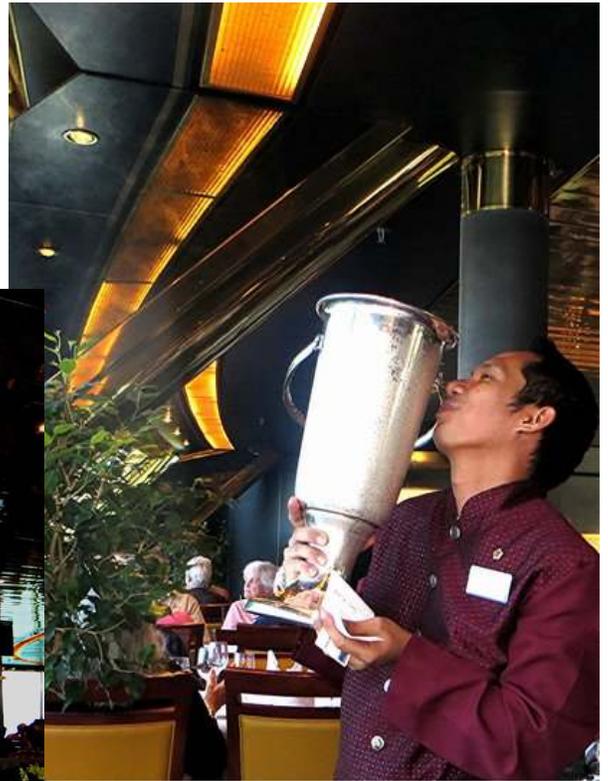
Although we looked forward to arriving in Auckland there was a note of sadness about it because our table mates, Bob and Jessie Lester, were leaving the ship at this port. Bob and Jessie are from Adelaide, Australia, and ever since they joined our table the



conversation about life in the US and in Australia has flowed easily and the friendship has grown. Early in the meal we poured the wine and toasted our friendship as shown in the picture on the left.

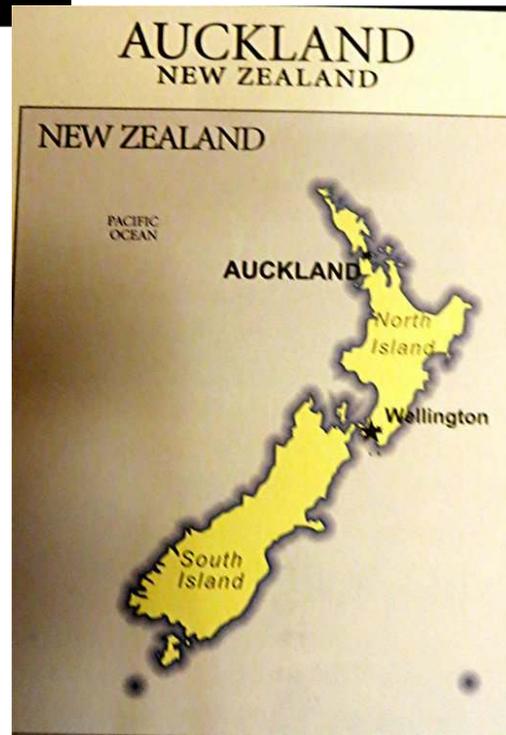
Bob Orlin Barbara Gayle Roy Jessie

Our wine steward, Teo, has a fine sense of humor and added a little levity to our last meal with Bob and Jessie.



Bob and Jessie fly out of Auckland tomorrow and should be home in Adelaide the same day.

We arrived in the beautiful harbor of Auckland about 6pm. The location of Auckland on the North Island of New Zealand is shown in the map on the left.



The weather was perfect and the sailing fleet on the bay provided a beautiful setting for the skyline of the city as shown in the photo below. Comparable cities that keep coming to mind are San Diego, California and Sydney, Australia.



The Amsterdam tied up to the dock at Queens Wharf in Auckland. After the wonderful scenes we viewed while sailing through the harbor, it was a bit of a shock to be greeted at the gangway by the partially constructed “Shed 10” as shown on the right. Shed 10 wasn’t scheduled for completion until April 2013, but it was serviceable enough for the security people to set up their equipment and we were able to pass easily in and out of the Amsterdam while in Auckland.





As soon as the okay for going ashore was announced on the Amsterdam we walked off the ship and into the bustling streets of Auckland. Queen's Wharf leads on to Queen Street which is one of the main streets of Auckland. We walked five or six blocks up Queen Street browsing through souvenir shops, drug stores and a super market as we went along. We came to Victoria Street and saw the iconic Sky Tower of Auckland, as shown on the left.

At that point we decided to leave further exploration of the city for tomorrow and headed back to the Amsterdam. About that time Barbara spotted some curious sculpture pieces, shown below. They were in a shop called "From N to Z Classic Kiwi Culture" www.fromntoz.co.nz.



A goat and Kiwi bird had been created out of metal in a way that gave the appearance of something soft and fuzzy.

In a discussion with the enthusiastic salesman we learned that the sculpted animals were created in a shop specializing in metal cutting and welding. The shop called Rustic Twist

(www.rustictwist.co.nz) had taken old used corrugated iron roofing and copper water tanks and turned them into works of art. The metal forming skill and artistic ability that went into making the animals was impressive and Barbara immediately saw how they could be folded into our decorating and yard scene back home. However, they turned out to be very pricey at \$900 USD for the goat and \$500 USD for the Kiwi. Shipping would probably be an additional \$150 USD. With such a high price and since we were early in the cruise with many souvenir temptations to come we eventually decided to let this opportunity pass by.

We finished our evening's stroll by walking back down Queen Street where we got a picture of the Amsterdam, proudly displaying the "World Voyage" sign and with the bow practically hanging over the city street.



We turned in for the night expecting a big day of touring Auckland tomorrow. Our plan is to take a Hop On – Hop Off (HOHO) bus to visit some city highlights and get more familiar with some of the neighborhoods around Auckland.