

Los Angeles - Dave & Elsie (September 28, 2009): Monday, September 28 finally rolled around and the alarm went off at 3:45am telling us it was time to get up and be on our way to Los Angeles and the get together with long time friends Dave, and Elsie. Steve rolled down the driveway at 4:30am, still groggy but ready to take us to the airport for our 6:30am flight to Los Angeles. Never one to miss an opportunity to ham it up a bit, Steve posed for this picture.



We made it to the Knoxville Airport and Steve took this traditional picture

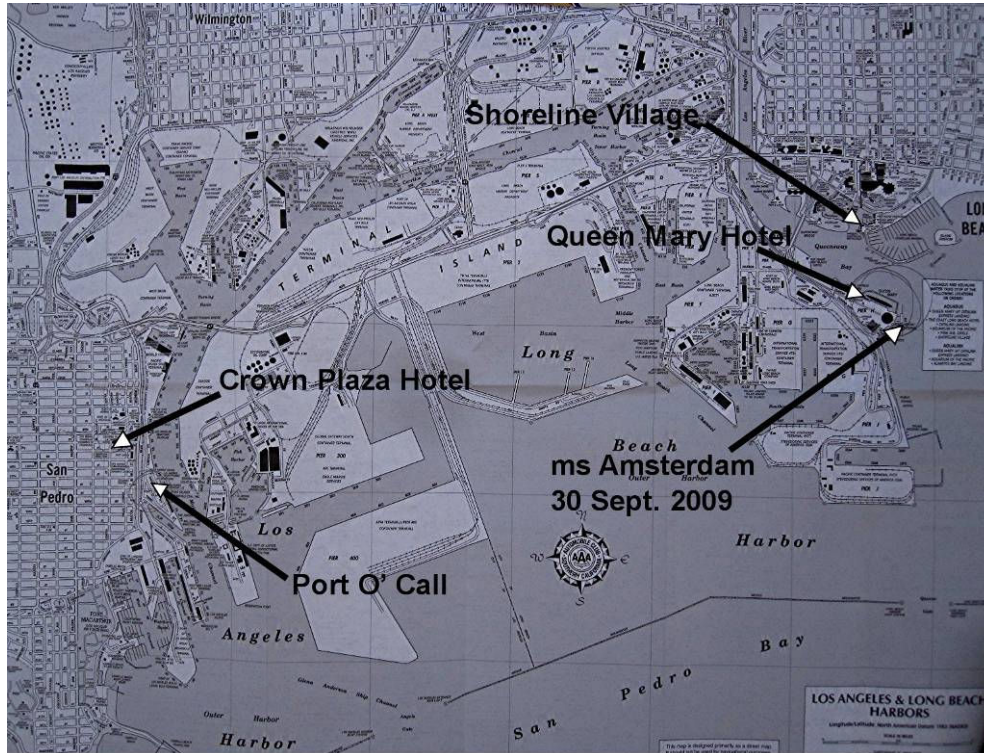


as we said goodbye and headed for the Delta check-in counter.

The flight to Los Angeles (LAX) went well and we arrived, on schedule, at 10:30am. It was one of those typical sunny Southern California days with comfortable temperature. We took one of the blue Super

Shuttle vans from LAX to the Crown Plaza Hotel in San Pedro. We shared the van with 4 other parties who were headed for different cruise ships in the San Pedro/Long Beach Harbor area. We arrived at the Crown Plaza Hotel where we saw that our friends, Dave and Elsie, had just arrived by car moments before and were finishing the registration procedure. During our check in Orlin made the traumatic discovery that he had left his credit card with the Super Shuttle van driver who had just pulled out of the driveway headed for his next stop. After a series of frantic phone calls we were able to contact Chris, the driver, and arranged to meet him at the Los Angeles Airport. Dave drove us to the airport where, with a great deal of relief we retrieved our credit card from Chris. The day, which had taken a bad turn, suddenly looked a lot better from that point on.

The Crown Plaza Hotel was well situated to serve as the operating base for our visit to the Los Angeles area and joining up with the Amsterdam after a couple days of sight seeing. The map below shows where the hotel was located in San Pedro and some of the local sites of interest, including the Amsterdam when it arrived on 30 September.



After the issue of Orlin's credit card was out of the way we were back on track to do a little sight seeing before dinner. We drove to a spot on the San Pedro Harbor called Ports O' Call Village which contains tourist shops and many sea food restaurants. Here is a picture of Dave and Elsie with Barbara at one of Restaurants.

There were lots of beautiful sailing ships and yachts tied up at the docks of Ports O' Call.





We whetted our appetites by checking out the displays of crab and lobster at the fish markets and restaurants along the wharf. Here are some examples of the great looking seafood.



A Mexican band was playing a lively tune in one of the dockside restaurants near where we eventually settled in for an early dinner of fish and chips.



After dinner we drove around the San Pedro area and from a lookout point above the city we got this picture of the harbor area.



With all the other attractions and activity around the Los Angeles area it is easy to overlook the maritime heritage. However, today we were reminded of just how large the Los Angeles Harbor facility is in the region's commerce and tourist industries.

This pretty well completed our day of travel to Los Angeles and meeting up with Dave and Elsie. Tomorrow we have a big day planned for visiting the Pompeii Exhibit at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) as well as the La Brea Tar Pits prehistoric animal museum which is next door to LACMA.