

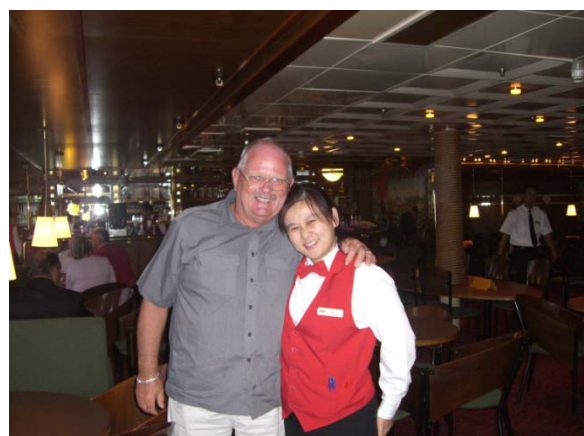
EAST TO WEST WORLD CRUISE - THE FIRST FEW DAYS

At 2am on a cold and stark morning, Benjamin drove us and our cases to an almost deserted Chester, to join our coach to take us to Falmouth to reboard the Van Gogh. Standing on the pavement at Chester was a fellow traveller, and indeed a fellow "Guest Lecturer" - Father Tim Brien from Rossett - our onboard priest/chaplain. After our warm introductions, and after he realised what we were doing on the ship, he immediately enrolled (still standing on the pavement) as our first Van Gogh Computer Club member!

The journey down to Falmouth was OK, we knew we would lose a night's sleep, and have more than a few miles to travel, so it mattered little that we first drove northwards to Liverpool, then to a variety of towns to collect passengers, finally making our way direct, from Stafford to Falmouth.

Boarding the Van Gogh was truly an unforgettable experience, and magically so too! We were so warmly greeted by passengers we had met on the last cruise, as if we were old family members.

Once aboard, at least half of the ships crew, and a similar number of the Travelscope staff greeted us with open arms, hugs, warm kisses, and with kind thoughts and genuine words.



On our first full day we were given a cocktail party introduction to our fellow Guest Lecturers. We immediately "clicked" as a happy gang, and have kept closely together ever since. We eat together, spend our evenings together, go ashore together, and each help the other in every way possible.



As an example, we have a retired ex deputy chief fingerprint expert at Scotland Yard giving talks, and who attends all of our morning pc workshops and assists with our teaching - a godsend as our attendance numbers are so high!

We prepared our publicity material to advertise on the notice boards before we left home, laminating each page. The other lecturers were suitably impressed, and asked us if we would design and print similar ones for them. We said that we would do so, but would prefer to design individual ones for each of them. OK, a bit of a rush task for us, but how rewarding when we were genuinely thanked. We were amazed when the Art Lecturer, George, was so impressed with his when he saw it - an Art expert praising an Accountant for design and artwork!!!

We feel "at home" again, and enjoy having the respect of wearing our badges, and Guest Lecturer status. It is difficult to see how our large number of Van Gogh Computer Club members are going to fare after we have left the ship in Australia - an interesting thought!!

