

Capt. Daley's Sea Stories

Walvis Bay Dry Dock Dalfrey Tide, 2 of 2

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Walvis Bay, Namibia has been a haven for sea vessels because of its natural deepwater harbor, protected by the Pelican Point sand spit. Being rich in plankton and marine life, these waters drew large numbers of whales attracting whalers and fishing vessels. The Dutch referred to it as Walvisch Baye and the English as Whale Bay. The town has 43,700 inhabitants and owns 11 sq miles of land.

I was captain of the Dalfrey Tide during two weeks of the dry docking. After a quick Saturday afternoon trip North to Swakopmund, I decided to stay an extra two weeks to tour Namibia.



Primer coat complete, ready for painting



The innocuous looking white smoke is from a fish processing plant. The stench is horrible. You can be sound asleep in bed and with a wind shift change, wake up gagging. It was the only unpleasant experience in the entire process.



Walvis Bay served as a cruise ship stop to see Swakopmund some 20 miles to the North on the coast.



Here is the outside of the Mission to Seafarers.



And the front door



Here is the first of the three important rooms in the Seafarers' Mission, the room with the high speed internet and computers. Every night the room was packed with mariners videoconferencing their families in Russia, Philippines, USA or where ever.



The second most important room was the chapel run by Episcopalians.



And of course the third was the bar. This is less than one fourth of it. There were many activities including billiards and even a swimming pool. If you are ever in Walvis Bay, the mission is a must see place (if you are a seafarer). Even the food there was inexpensive and excellent with a variety of wines from South Africa.



Salt evaporation ponds, also called salt pans, are shallow artificial ponds designed to produce salts from sea water. The seawater is fed into large ponds and water is drawn out through natural evaporation which allows the salt to be subsequently harvested. The ponds also provide a productive resting and feeding ground for many species of water birds



Salt mounds in the evaporative process



There were thousands of pelicans and flamingoes living in the bay formed by Pelican Point.



There were some, though not many, upscale homes in the Walvis Bay area. This one was on the water front.



The first coat of paint has been applied to the hull.



There is still one more coat of paint to go.



Voilà! The final coat of paint is applied.



What a change in appearance as well as a change in performance.



Dave oversaw most of the project for Tidewater. As a buddy of mine would say, "This was not Dave's first rodeo."



He was the superintendant of the dry docks for the contractor, NamDock.



The finish even looks faster.



Now here is a fun job, if you are interested – polishing the propellers.



The Raft is a favorite and famous restaurant in Walvis Bay. I treated Dave to dinner here on my last night in town.