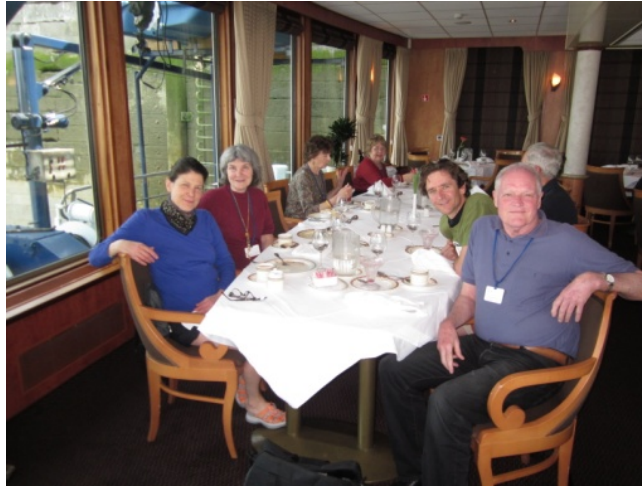


## Partial PMVC Reunion in Belgium and Holland

On May 6, 2011 PMVC expatriate Ruud van Dijk and his wife Joan drove from their home just south of Amsterdam, Netherlands to meet up with Oscar and Emily in Antwerp, Belgium, for a walking tour of the Old Town, lunch on board the canal-touring ship that Emily and Oscar were taking around Holland and Belgium, followed in the afternoon by a 27-mile ride by Ruud and Oscar out into the Flanders countryside. Here is us all in the ship's dining room (at the captain's table, of course):



The most exciting part of the Antwerp ride was weaving in and out of pedestrians and other cyclists in the dimly-lit and narrow bicycle/pedestrian tunnel under the Scheldt river to get out of town.

On May 11 Emily and Oscar were in Amsterdam, and Ruud and Joan invited them for dinner in their picturesque little village of Nederhorst den Berg some 18km south of the city. Ruud and Joan live in the oldest building in town, and he has a shed in which he is slowly assembling his bicycle collection, until he gets to the minimum number of 12. First Ruud and Oscar watched the last 75 km of the Giro d'Italia stage, won over dirt roads in a late solo breakaway by a Dutchman, of course, Rabobank's Pieter Weening. It was Oscar's birthday, in honor of which Ruud called Michele Conforti in Verona, who had just come back from an 80km ride. Michele claims to have lost 5 kilos from his already svelte body, and promises to fly over the Pittsburgh hills when he visits later this summer. Oscar promises to be out of town.

Before dinner Ruud took Oscar on some of his local roads and bike paths, including one of his three local hills (in Holland this means overpasses over highways). This windmill picture below, showing you're not in Pittsburgh any more, was taken on that ride:



All the roads are cluttered with other cyclists, both real and commuting, as that picture shows.

The picture below shows Ruud as the proud wearer of his newly-acquired Dirty Dozen jersey just before the Antwerp ride:



Ruud declared his intention to wait for his return to Pittsburgh until he is one year older than Oscar was in order to eclipse the DD record for the oldest person to score points – 60 years of age, I think, but Danny Chew will know for sure. Good luck. Now points go wimpily from from 1-10, not 1-5 as formerly.