

*Another interesting feature of the bridge wing is the re-enforced glass window cut into the floor or deck.*

of the officer controlling the navigation of the ship or 'conning' the ship.

24-hour manning is organized through a system of Watches, hence the alternative name for officers, (both Deck and Engine) as 'watchkeepers'.

The Deck Department usually has at least four senior watchkeepers who keep or 'stand' Watches lasting between 2 and 4 hours depending on the time of day or night. However, bad weather conditions, poor visibility or just busy navigational waters will usually mean that the Captain or Chief Officer is also called to the Bridge.

The Bridge is located on Navigation Deck. With the exception of the Prinsendam, all ships in the fleet now have enclosed bridge wings. These are the overhang areas on the port and

starboard side of the Bridge where you can usually see the Captain docking or undocking the ship. Approaching or leaving a berth, the Captain will maneuver the ship from the control console located on the bridge wing, nearest to the dock. Both bridge wings have identical control consoles that are replicated on the center console of the Bridge.

Another interesting feature of the bridge wing is the re-enforced glass window cut into the floor or deck. Measuring about 36" x 18", this window in the floor or deck allows the Captain and Chief Officer to see whether they have stopped the ship in the correct location. It is also useful for seeing how far the ship is from the dock.

Portside bridgewing maneuvering console



But how come? – Well next time you walk along the dockside into town, look out for the painted squares or symbols actually on the dock's edge with different ships' names painted in them. Find the one with the name of your ship and then glance up – you will almost certainly be looking straight through the 'floor' window. When a cruise ship visits a port regularly, the sailors often paint these guide marks on the dockside. The Bridge team can't always see where parts of the ship are in relation to the ground and must rely on instructions from Deck officers placed at 'stations' fore and aft. In order to make the best use of the space available when tying up the ship, the painted squares act as



Glass window in bridge deck floor

markers. Usually, ships of the same class can use each other's boxes, as the ships' dimensions will be the same.

For further information about docking and undocking the ship, look out for the next CruiseQs – "All gone forward, all gone aft".

In terms of navigation equipment, the Bridge of all Holland America Line ships



Radar display (light yellow) superimposed on electronic chart picture of Half Moon Cay. The ship is shown in the lower center of the display.