

APRIL, 2016 VOLUME XXXIII, # 4

Thursday, April 21, 2016 – 6:00 PM

At the Community Church Assembly Room, 40 East 35th Street, Manhattan

A Tale of Three Shipwrecks

By Jim Kalafus

Jim Kalafus, a recognized expert on ship disasters, will discuss the strange misfortunes that befell three Atlantic, Gulf and West Indies ships--*Mohawk*, *Morro Castle* and *Mohawk*--in the same stretch of water off the New Jersey coast over the course of a decade.

January, 1925. While sailing south, the Clyde-Mallory liner *Mohawk* is caught in storm-of-the-century-type squalls off central New Jersey and catches fire. A day later, the ship slips into calmer water inside the Delaware breakwater where everyone aboard is evacuated safely. The *Mohawk* then sinks. A new ship, also called *Mohawk*, is soon built.

September, 1934. The story of Ward Line's *Morro Castle* parallels the first *Mohawk*, but ends with significant loss of life. Heading north in the same stretch of water as the *Mohawk*, the ship encounters heavy winds and catches fire. The ship is totally abandoned by the time its burning hull drifts towards the Asbury Park shoreline.

January, 1935. The Ward Line-chartered second *Mohawk* replaces the *Morro Castle* on the New York-to-Havana route. While heading south on her maiden voyage, the ship sails into the worst blizzard of 1935. Passengers brave the sub-zero temperatures on the promenade deck to see the *Morro Castle* hull still beached at Asbury Park. An hour later, the *Mohawk's* steering system jams and it swerves into the path of the oncoming Norwegian freighter *Talisman*. Within 40 minutes, the *Mohawk* sinks. At least 33 people perish.

Jim is a founder and editor of [Gare Maritime](#), a compendium of research on the *Lusitania* and *Morro Castle* disasters containing photos, biographies of passengers and crew, first-hand accounts by survivors and interviews with their families.



The fire-ravaged MORRO CASTLE drifts ashore at Asbury Park, NJ, September, 1934.

(Jim Kalafus Collection)

NEXT EVENTS: Membership Meetings: Thursday, 4/21; Friday 5/20; Friday, 6/24
PONY group cruise on the QUEEN MARY 2, July 1-6

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MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE at Liverpool, UK, June 15, 2015.

(Bob Allen)

MUSEUMS, LECTURES AND HARBOR CRUISES

CONTACT THESE INSTITUTIONS BY EMAIL OR PHONE FOR CURRENT EVENTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org or 212-748-8600. See item below.

MYSTIC SEAPORT www.mysticseaport.org or 860-572-0711.

VANCOUVER WSS & VANCOUVER MARITIME MUSEUM www.worldshipsocietyvan.ca for information or if you visit, contact Glenn Smith: 604-684-1240, email glenn.smith@worldshipsocietyvan.ca Per their website, monthly meetings have been eliminated for the foreseeable future.

NEW SOUTH WALES WSS: Meetings are held at the Uniting Church Complex in Lord Street, Roseville. Contact the branch at PO Box 215, Strathfield, New South Wales 2135, Australia for additional information.

THE NATIONAL LIBERTY SHIP MEMORIAL, INC. www.ssjeremiahobrien.org or liberty@ssjeremiahobrien.org or 415-544-0100. 1275 Columbus Avenue, Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94133-1315.

PROJECT LIBERTY SHIP www.ssjohnwbrown.com or 410-558-0646. New York City visit, celebrating the school ship years, with cruises and ship visits, September 8 – September 19, 2016.

NEW YORK WATER TAXI, www.nywatertaxi.com or 866-989-2542. Harbor cruises departing from both South Street Seaport Pier 17 and Pier 84 at West 44 Street. Hop on – hop off service throughout New York Harbor is offered as well. Contact via website or telephone for departure times and prices.

CIRCLE LINE DOWNTOWN, www.circlelinedowntown.com or 866-989-2542. Harbor cruises on the ZEPHYR from April to December, and aboard New York Water Taxi from January to March, departing from Pier 17, South Street Seaport.

CIRCLE LINE, www.circleline42.com or 877-731-0064. Circle Manhattan and other harbor cruises, departing from pier 84 at West 44 Street.

NEW YORK WATERWAY, www.nywaterway.com or 800-533-3779. Trans-Hudson ferry service and special-event cruises.

THE NATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM www.lighthousemuseum.org or 855-656-7469. Contact for schedule of cruises and events.

THE WORKING HARBOR COMMITTEE www.workingharbor.com or 212-757-1600. Cruises to both remote and well-travelled parts of New York Harbor - the Hudson River to view tugboat races, Gowanus Bay and Erie Basin in Brooklyn, and a circumnavigation of Staten Island.

THE NOBLE MARITIME COLLECTION, www.noblemaritime.org or 718-447-6490. Maritime lectures and art exhibits at the Sailor's Snug Harbor Cultural Center on Staten Island, NY.

LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER www.lsc.org or 201-200-1000. The Liberty Science Center, located at 222 Jersey City Boulevard in Jersey City, New Jersey, is presenting "Titanic, The Artifact Exhibition" until May 30. This exhibition contains over 100 authentic artifacts retrieved from the Titanic and has recreations of several cabins and other areas of the ship. It is open on Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM and on Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. It is closed on Mondays.

**EXHIBITS RETURN TO SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM;
FOUNDER PETER STANFORD DIES THE FOLLOWING WEEK**

After years of financial uncertainty, coupled with devastating damage suffered during Hurricane Sandy, the South Street Seaport Museum is finally in revival mode. The first exhibit since 2012, "Street of Ships: The Port and Its People," opened on March 16. Hurricane Sandy severely damaged the museum's electrical and computer systems, and flooding of the historic buildings was extensive. Fortunately, museum collections were stored on high floors and were undamaged, and the historic vessels also fared well during the storm. The museum continues to rebuild with funds from The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the City and State of New York. Ironically, eight days after the new exhibit opened, South Street Seaport's founder, Peter Stanford, passed away from a stroke at the age of 89. Stanford, a Harvard-educated history major, was a sailing enthusiast who served as a teenage Navy radioman during World War II. A career in market research and advertising followed, and in 1966 he and his wife Norma founded the "Friends of South Street" in 1966. The New York Times' famous architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable enthusiastically praised the group, and the area just south of the Brooklyn Bridge was declared a landmark prime for historic preservation shortly thereafter. In 1967, Peter and Norma quit their jobs to found the South Street Seaport Museum, with the help of ship owner Jakob Isbrandtsen. Stanford stayed with the museum until 1976, by which time pressure to commercially develop the area became intense, and the Rouse Corporation was brought soon after to develop a "festival marketplace." This concept was based upon the recent success of the Faneuil Hall redevelopment in Boston. Peter also co-founded and supervised OpSail celebrating the U.S bicentennial in 1976, and the Statue of Liberty Parade of Sail in honor of the statue's centennial in 1986. The museum's current executive director, Jonathan Boulware stated: "The Seaport Museum exists today because of the Stanfords' vision in the 1960's, a time in which development pressures nearly destroyed this New York treasure."

Besides the new exhibit "Street of Ships: The Port and Its People," the following walking tours are upcoming in April:

"TITANIC's Seaport," April 14-16

"The Secret Life of the Brooklyn Bridge," Thursdays, April 21 through May 26

"A Wicked Tour of the Fourth Ward," Fridays, April 22 – May 27

For additional information, contact the museum at www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org or 212-748-8600.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

SHIP	FROM	TO	VOYAGE	PASSENGER(S)	DATE
KONG HARALD	Alesund	Kirkenes	Norwegian Coastal	Bill & Laura Donall	12/15
VEENDAM	Ft. Lauderdale	Ft. Lauderdale	Southern Caribbean	Matt Jacobs	02/16

SHIP'S LOG – FEBRUARY

Last year kept Cunard busy celebrating its 175th anniversary. Several months ago our illustrious member, Bill Miller, author of almost 100 maritime books, gave us a program depicting the anniversary celebrations in Liverpool. In February, he returned to show the sequel – the QUEEN MARY 2's re-enactment of Cunard's very first trans-Atlantic crossing, that of BRITANNIA in July 1840, from Liverpool to New York by way of Halifax and Boston.

First, with his customary enthusiasm, Bill took us through Cunard's history, to the accompaniment of both archival and current Cunard photos and, of course, examples of Bill's own artistry. He lavished attention on the original QUEEN MARY, comparing her with the QUEEN ELIZABETH, describing the MARY as "embracing you," while the ELIZABETH never projected that same feeling. We heard of the evil effects of the jet plane; the fates of the two QUEENS; and Cunard's decision to build one last liner, a "ship of the future" – QE2, and the changing reaction of the public toward her to one of affection. Having cruised her last in 2008, she ended up in Dubai, where plans to convert her to a hotel are stagnant, and sadly, Bill doesn't see much of a future for her. The story continued on a happier note with Cunard's sale to Carnival, which led to the construction of QUEEN MARY 2 as a successor to the previous QUEENS, and now three QUEENS are sailing the seas.

Then Bill proceeded to the actual re-enactment. As did its historic predecessor, the BRITANNIA, the QM2 sailed from Southampton to Liverpool ("Cunard's spiritual home"), where passengers boarded, as they did 175 years before. We saw the commemorative service in the Liverpool Cathedral with all its pomp, as well as the crowds, the onboard celebratory events in both Halifax and Boston, and we saw him in action. The Boston festivities took place in the Cunard Building, now repurposed with condos, with one public room a replica of a room on the BRITANNIA, and we were shown a photo of the model of the ETRURIA given to the developer in appreciation.

Bill showed us the arrival in New York, saluted by the retired fireboat JOHN J. HARVEY, repeating the role she played at the arrival of the first QUEEN MARY. Celebrations in New York delayed the QM's arrival at The Battery in the evening, where before she sailed off, she, and we were treated to a magnificent laser show, compared by Bill to "jewels against black velvet."

Bill ended this spectacular show with a resounding wish of Happy 175th Birthday to Cunard.

No, there was no anniversary cake among the refreshments, but we enjoyed them anyway.

Marge Dovman



The historic Liverpool waterfront, from where QUEEN MARY 2 began her commemorative voyage. At left is the Royal Liver building (with clock tower) the Cunard Building is to it's right, and The Port of Liverpool Building features the large central dome. (Bob Allen)

2016 PONY BRANCH CRUISE – JULY 4TH WEEKEND ON THE NEWLY RENOVATED QUEEN MARY 2

Join us on Friday, July 1st for a five-night holiday weekend cruise to Halifax and Boston aboard Cunard Line's flagship QUEEN MARY 2. The QUEEN MARY 2 is the largest transatlantic liner ever to sail and many regard her as the grandest of all time. Cunard's service and cuisine are legendary. This will be the first voyage from New York following the extensive refit of the ship's Deck 7 dining venues and lounges, the replacement of the Todd English restaurant with the Verandah, the addition of new balcony cabins on Deck 13, and new single occupancy cabins on Decks 2 and 3.

Halifax is a favorite port of call for maritime historians and enthusiasts. Samuel Cunard was born here and Cunard Line has always been an integral part of the city. You can explore the city on your own, visit the acclaimed Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, or join one of several shore excursions to places such as Peggy's Cove and Grand Pre National Historic Site. Boston's Freedom Trail, Public Gardens, and nearby Revolutionary War sites beckon and we'll be in port for the spectacular July 4th fireworks display. There will be a party for members on board. Watch for news about a special program.

To reserve your cabin or for more information, please contact
Brad Hatry at Pisa Brothers Travel at 212.265.8420 ext. 222; 800.729.7472 ext. 222; fax 212.265.8753,
or email: brad@pisabrothers.com

SHIP NEWS

NEW LINERS, LARGE AND SMALL: With recently announced orders from MSC and Ponant, it is clear that tremendous growth in the cruise industry is continuing at a staggering pace. 58 cruise ships are currently on order worldwide, with a combined price tag in excess of \$42 billion. These vessels will bring over 175,000 berths to the world's cruise fleet, and the diversity of the lineup is impressive. Ponant's four new ships will be approximately 10,000-tons, with all-suite accommodations for 184 passengers. Amenities will include zodiacs for up-close exploration of natural wonders, and a glass-enclosed underwater lounge for viewing sea beds, coral reefs and marine life. At the opposite end of the spectrum, MSC's new "World Class" ships will be over 200,000-tons and carry 5,400 passengers, making them second in size only to Royal Caribbean's OASIS OF THE SEAS-Class. These new mega-ships, to be built at STX France and powered by diesel and liquefied natural gas, will have many new yet-to-be-announced onboard features. MSC now has 8 ships on order with options for 3 more, and is well on its way to becoming a major cruise line in league with Carnival, Royal Caribbean and NCL. In between these extremes are newbuilds for Carnival, Royal Caribbean, Regent, TUI, Seabourne, Dream, Star Clippers, Viking Ocean, Norwegian, AIDA, Silversea, Princess, Crystal, Scenic, Holland America, Celebrity, Costa, Costa Asia, P&O Australia, Saga, Virgin, and Disney. There is no doubt that there is a cruise ship for all tastes and budgets!



Ponant Cruises, the French luxury/expedition line, will enlarge its fleet with four new vessels to be built at Vard in Norway. (Ponant Cruises)

COLUMBUS TO SAIL THE SEAS AGAIN: British budget operator Cruise & Maritime Voyages (CMV) has announced yet another addition to their fast-growing fleet. In 2017, the 63,786-ton, 1,800-passenger COLUMBUS will be their newest and largest ship. A ship with an interesting history, she was to have debuted as FAIRMAJESTY, one of three new vessels contracted by Sitmar Cruises in the mid-1980's. But the 1980's saw a wave of cruise line mergers, and in 1988 Princess Cruises purchased Sitmar and their unfinished flagship, as well as the contracts to build two sister ships. FAIRMAJESTY was christened STAR PRINCESS by a true Hollywood star – Audrey Hepburn – in 1989, and entered Caribbean service from Ft. Lauderdale that spring. In 1997, she was transferred to the P&O fleet, taking the traditional name ARCADIA, and was positioned on cruise service from the UK during the summer, and was Caribbean-based in winter. In 2003 she was transferred to the P&O start-up Ocean Village, a cruise line geared towards a younger clientele and was named, predictably, OCEAN VILLAGE. Ocean Village was not successful and was dissolved, so she was transferred again, this time to P&O Australia and christened PACIFIC PEARL in 2010. COLUMBUS will receive a cosmetic upgrade before she enters service for CMV in June 2017.



CMV's new flagship in 2017 will be the 1989-built COLUMBUS, a ship with a colorful history and five former names. (Cruise & Maritime Voyages)

MORE WAYS TO CRUISE TO CUBA: The Cuban government in March formally approved the first “people-to people cultural exchange cruises” directly from the US to Cuba, which begin on May 1 with the Carnival Corporation’s new Fathom brand. The cruises will be on the 702-passenger ADONIA, which was built in 2001 for Renaissance Cruises as R Eight, and later sailed as Swan Hellenic’s MINERVA II and P&O’s ROYAL PRINCESS. ADONIA will sail from Miami and visit Havana, Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba, before returning to Havana. A second cruise line received permission for similar cruises in April. French cruise line Ponant will position their 64-passenger luxury sailing vessel LE PONANT on 7 or 8-night cruises to Cuba from Miami in January 2017. A third cruise line, Pearl Seas Cruises, has yet to be granted approval from the Cuban government for direct departures from the US. When they receive permission, they will base a vessel in Ft. Lauderdale; itineraries are pending. Cruises home ported in Havana, which are not open to Americans, are also expanding. MSC cruises, which already has the ARMONIA based in the Cuban capital, will add the larger OPERA in fall 2016. Celestyal Cruises will continue winter cruises from Havana on the 1992-built CELESTYAL CRYSTAL, a 904-passenger vessel that once sailed in the US market as NCL’s LEEWARD.



Fathom Cruises’ ADONIA (above) and Ponant’s LE PONANT (below) will both offer cruises to Cuba from Miami, ending a ban on direct US-to-Cuba cruises that has been in place for over 50 years. (Fathom Cruises and Ponant Cruises)

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