

APRIL, 2017 VOLUME XXXIV, # 4

1980's Cruising, 1950's Style

Cruise Line Videos of Former Transatlantic Liners

by Bob Allen

Friday, April 28, 2017 – 6:00 PM

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

The 1980's and 1990's were the heyday of cruising on former transatlantic liners. "Ships of State," built in the 1950's and 1960's, were converted to cruise ships which plied the world's most exotic cruise routes. Our April program spotlights three of these vessels which had long, successful cruising careers following more than a decade of transatlantic service. The American Export Lines' sister ships INDEPENDENCE and CONSTITUTION, and Holland America Line's ROTTERDAM, were highly successful liners that became even more popular as full-time cruise ships. Our program will feature two vintage promotional cruise line videos. America Hawaii Cruises' "Don't Miss a Thing" encouraged prospective mid-1980's passengers to seek the islands' lush tropical beauty from the decks of the freshly renovated American sister ships. Holland America Line produced a fascinating video in 1989, celebrating their flagship ROTTERDAM's 30th Anniversary and recent refurbishment. In addition to historical footage of the ROTTERDAM'S construction and fitting out, the video features Bill Miller describing the glories of sailing the "Grand Dame" of the world's cruise fleet.

Join us for a unique look back to the glamorous days of cruising on great ocean liners!



INDEPENDENCE and CONSTITUTION in New York, October 1956 (AEL/Bob Allen coll.)



CONSTITUTION at Hilo, Hawaii in April 1991, with a distinctive floral logo on her twin funnels (Bob Allen)



ROTTERDAM at sea with her original grey hull, during the 1960's (HAL/Bob Allen collection)



ROTTERDAM at anchor during the 1995 World Cruise

(HAL/Bob Allen collection)

NEXT EVENTS: Membership meetings: May 19; June 23. Group cruise on the QUEEN VICTORIA, July 1-8, 2017.

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E-MAIL: wsspony@gmail.com

WEBSITE: www.worldshipny.com

MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



LEONARDO DA VINCI at New York, January 1976.

(Bob Allen)

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

SHIP	FROM	TO	VOYAGE	PASSENGER(S)	DATE
OOSTERDAM	Ft. Lauderdale	Civitavecchia	Transatlantic	Dr. Stephen & Mrs. Joyanne Schoeman	03/17
KONINGSNDAM	Civitavecchia	Civitavecchia	Maiden Voyage Mediterranean	Dr. Stephen & Mrs. Joyanne Schoeman	04/17
VEENDAM	Boston	Boston	Bermuda	Dr. Stephen & Mrs. Joyanne Schoeman	06/17
WESTERDAM	San Diego	Honolulu	Transpacific / Hawaii	Dr. Stephen & Mrs. Joyanne Schoeman	10/17
N. AMSTERDAM	Ft. Lauderdale	Ft. Lauderdale	Caribbean	Dr. Stephen & Mrs. Joyanne Schoeman	12/17

MUSEUMS, LECTURES AND HARBOR CRUISES

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

THE SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM TURNS 50!

Saturday, April 29, 11am-5pm

Bell-ringing Ceremony on Pier 16 at 1pm!

Please join us for this FREE community celebration.

The South Street Seaport Museum invites you to join the kick-off of its fiftieth year with a public celebration on Saturday, April 29th! This family-friendly event will include free admission throughout the day to all of the Museum's offerings within the historic Seaport District, including tours of current exhibitions, tours of our historic ships, letterpress printing demonstrations by Bowne Printers, family educational activities and music on Pier 16. At 1pm on Pier 16, Museum founders, trustees, staff, volunteers, and elected officials, including special guest City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, will launch a year-long celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the South Street Seaport Museum! We look forward to celebrating with you as we build on past successes and pave the way for a robust future for the Seaport Museum!

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

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.

MERSEYSIDE WSS: Meetings are held at The Seafarers' Centre, Cambridge Road, Crosby L22 1RQ. Contact the Mersey Log editor for more information at johnthomas23@gmail.com or 01244 34702.

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.org or 410-558-0646. Visit or sail on the World War II vintage Liberty Ship, based in Baltimore, MD. Contact for dates and more information.

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 718-390-0040 – **PLEASE NOTE NEW PHONE NUMBER!** Contact for schedule of cruises and other 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.

SHIP'S LOG

Ship's log will return in the May issue of The Porthole.

Transatlantic Crossing on Cunard Line's QUEEN ELIZABETH, January 7-16, 2017

By David G. Hume

In November last year, we saw a promotion for a nine-night transatlantic crossing from Southampton, England to New York on Cunard Line's newest ship, the *Queen Elizabeth*. This voyage was the first leg of the ship's 2017 World Cruise. The *Queen Elizabeth*, which entered service in 2010, is now considered a mid-sized ship. It is 965 feet long and has a gross tonnage of 90,901. By contrast, the *Queen Mary 2* is 1,131 feet long and has a gross tonnage in excess of 150,000. Since we had enjoyed our previous sailings on the *Queen Elizabeth*, including its maiden transatlantic crossing in 2010, we decided to book the crossing and make arrangements for a short pre-cruise stay in London.

On Thursday, January 5, 2017, we took a daytime flight from New York to London. After taking a Heathrow Connect train to Paddington Station, we transferred to the underground and took the Bakerloo Line to Waterloo Station. Then we had a short walk to the Hampton Hotel.

The next morning, after a full English breakfast at the hotel, we walked across the Thames via the Waterloo Bridge to Covent Garden and the ticket office at the Royal Opera House. We inquired if any tickets were available for that night's performance of *The Nutcracker*, starring an American ballerina, Sarah Lamb. Although some tickets were available, they were not in optimal locations, so we decided to come back later to check on returns.

From Covent Garden, we walked north on Charing Cross Road, then southeast on Shaftesbury Avenue to Piccadilly Circus. From there we again headed north on Regent Street to its intersection with Oxford Street. We shopped at the John Lewis store on Oxford Street before returning to Covent Garden by the underground.

The second visit to the Royal Opera House ticket office was successful. We purchased tickets in a great location in the stalls. To celebrate our good fortune in obtaining tickets, we decided to try Rules in nearby Maiden Lane for lunch. As any fan of *Downton Abbey* will remember, Rules was the site of many significant meetings. Upon our arrival at 1:30 PM, we were told that we could not be seated for lunch until 3:30 PM. We then learned that the restaurant had an opening for dinner, so we made a reservation for 5:30 PM and headed back to the hotel via the underground.

Later, we arrived back at Rules at the appointed time and were immediately seated. We each marveled at the period décor, harking back to the nineteenth century. Our dinner was excellent and we finished in plenty of time for the start of the ballet at 7:30 PM. It is always a pleasure to see the ornately decorated interior of the Royal Opera House and enjoy its superb acoustics.

On Saturday, January 7, 2017, after a good night's rest and another full English breakfast, we left our hotel for the short walk to Waterloo Station and our 9:30 AM train to Southampton.

We arrived at Southampton at about 11:20 AM and took a taxi to the Ocean Terminal, where the *Queen Elizabeth* was docked. We quickly handed our suitcases to a porter and then proceeded into the terminal. The embarkation line was very short and we were soon on our way to the security screening area for a scan of our carry-on bags. We were able to board the ship after only a short delay.

Once on board, we went straight to our balcony cabin located aft on the port side of Deck 6 and stowed our carry-ons and coats. We then went to the Lido Restaurant on Deck 9. By 12:30 PM we were enjoying our lunch and our table by the window with its great view of the piers for the Isle of Wight ferries and the port of Southampton.

After lunch, we explored the ship and admired its Art Deco décor. The three-deck lobby in the center of the ship has a beautiful marquetry panel portraying the bow of the *Queen Elizabeth*. This panel was provided by David Armstrong-Jones, the 2nd Earl of Snowden, often referred to as Viscount Linley. The library on Deck 2, just off the lobby, has a spiral staircase up to Deck 3. A large selection of fiction and non-fiction books can be borrowed. Travel-related reference books can be perused in the library. A librarian is on duty to help with any inquiries. Each day in the library, a crossword puzzle and a Sudoku puzzle are provided at the entrance on Deck 2.

As you head forward on Deck 2 from the lobby on the starboard side, you enter the Queen's Room, a two-deck lounge with a large dance floor. This is the venue for dance classes, afternoon tea and ballroom dancing at night.

At you proceed toward the bow on Deck 2, you find the balcony of the Royal Court Theatre. This room, with its tiered seating and side balconies, resembles a West End theatre in London. During the day, you can attend lectures and, in the evening, enjoy comedians, classical music concerts and production shows with singers and dancers. On our voyage, we enjoyed five lectures by William Miller, aptly dubbed "Mr. Ocean Liner", who regaled large audiences with tales of liners and cruise ships of yesteryear and today. We also enjoyed lectures by Brian Hoey on the British royal family. Since there was a former footman to Queen Elizabeth on board the ship, Brian would occasionally ask him for confirmation of certain facts.

Dinner aboard the *Queen Elizabeth* is served in five separate venues, the Queen's Grill, the Princess Grill, the Britannia Restaurant, the Verandah Restaurant and the aforementioned Lido Restaurant.

The passengers in Queen's Grill suites dine in the Queen's Grill on the port side of Deck 11 in the middle of the ship.

Directly opposite the Queen's Grill is the Princess Grill for the passengers occupying Princess Grill suites.

The majority of passengers dine in the largest dining room, the Britannia Restaurant on Decks 2 and 3 at the stern. Since the *Queen Elizabeth* can accommodate over 2,000 passengers, it is necessary to schedule two sittings for dinner, one at 6:30 PM and one at 8:30 PM. For this voyage, we were assigned to a table on the lower level of the Britannia Restaurant for the late sitting. On one evening, our entrée options included, among other things, broiled lobster tail, duck à l'Orange and beef Wellington. The food was always tasty and the service was very professional.

The Verandah Restaurant is specialty restaurant located on the port side of Deck 2 off the lobby. Lunch and dinner are served here for an additional charge. This space is decorated in Art Deco style similar to the Verandah Grill on the original *Queen Mary* of 1936. We dined in the Verandah Restaurant once for lunch with a friend who was on board. This restaurant offers many French specialties and the large windows provide a great view of waves rolling by the ship.

The final dining venue is the aforementioned Lido Restaurant, with cafeteria-style service for breakfast, lunch and dinner. In the evenings, a section of the Lido Restaurant was cordoned off as a specialty restaurant with waiter service. While we were on board, the space became the Smokehouse, offering American smokehouse cuisine, for four nights, La Piazza, offering Italian cuisine, for three nights and Coriander, offering Indian cuisine, for one night.

During the crossing, there were three formal nights. Men wore tuxedos and suits and women wore gowns and cocktail dresses. On these formal nights, many of the passengers were invited to pre-dinner cocktail parties hosted by the officers of the ship. These parties provided a good opportunity to meet and chat with the officers.

On Deck 10, the Commodore Club is an elegant room overlooking the bow of the ship. This room is a great venue for pre-dinner drinks. There is often a pianist playing popular tunes. Just aft of the Commodore Club is the Yacht Club. This venue opens at 11:00 PM and a DJ and a band alternate to provide lively music well past midnight.

One of the best features of the *Queen Elizabeth* is the promenade deck, which completely encircles Deck 3. The forward end is enclosed and protected from the wind over the bow. This deck has many padded lounge chairs, great for sitting and watching the sea or fellow passengers walking and jogging.

On the ninth day of our voyage, we docked at Pier 90 at 50th Street on the west side of Manhattan. This was one day before we were scheduled to disembark. The early arrival was designed to enable the passengers who were continuing on the World Cruise to sample the restaurants and night life of New York City. Several tours were offered, including a visit to the Cotton Club in Harlem. Those continuing on the World Cruise also had a full array of tours to choose from the following day.

The weather on our crossing was often overcast and sometimes rainy, but it was not very cold, because we took a more southerly course across the Atlantic. Also, the seas were very moderate, so there was very little pitching and almost no rolling. There was just enough movement of the ship on the waves to remind you that you were at sea.

We enjoyed our crossing on the *Queen Elizabeth* and we were sorry to disembark.

WSS PONY BRANCH PLANS CRUISE TO VENICE, ITALY IN 2017

The PONY WSS Branch's annual group cruise departs Civitavecchia (Rome), Italy on July 1, 2017. The itinerary is around the "boot" of Italy, calling at La Valletta, Malta and the Dalmatian coast ports of Kotor, Montenegro and Zadar, Croatia before arriving in the magical city of Venice one week later. We will sail on Cunard Line's elegant QUEEN VICTORIA, fresh from a multi-million dollar renovation. Contact Brad Hatry at Worldview Travel soon for the best stateroom selection. Brad@worldviewtravel.com, or 212-265-8420 or 800-729-7472, x 222.



QUEEN VICTORIA of 2007 is a perennial favorite of Cunard passengers. You can join WSS PONY on a cruise around Italy on this luxurious ship next summer. She is renowned for her superb service, ocean liner ambiance, and plush accommodations. (Cunard Line)

SAVE THE DATE!

World Ship PONY has another ship luncheon in the works for Sunday, August 20 on Celebrity Cruises' SUMMIT. We will be visiting this elegant ship, recently refurbished to include the latest features of the SOLSTICE Class, at her Bayonne, NJ terminal; motor coach transportation will be available. Details will follow in a future issue of The Porthole.



CELEBRITY SUMMIT at King's Wharf, Bermuda, May 27, 2011

(Bob Allen)

SHIP NEWS

TITANIC VOYAGE: Blue Marble Private, a London-based company, has scheduled dive trips to the TITANIC starting in May 2018. The last tourist trips to the wreck were made in 2012. The fare for the expedition is \$105,129 per person, which is the inflation-adjusted first class fare of \$4,350 charged on TITANIC's singular 1912 voyage. Passengers will descend in 90 minutes to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean in a titanium and carbon fiber submersible built by Ocean Gate Expeditions. Blue Marble is planning another season of dives in 2019, but those who want to visit the TITANIC had better start saving for their tickets soon. The wreck is reportedly deteriorating at a rapid pace, due to "extremophile bacteria" which are devouring the rusty steel remains of the vessel. It is estimated that she may survive only 15 or 20 more years.

EIGHT VIKINGS AND COUNTING; Viking Ocean Cruises announced in mid-April that they have reached an agreement to build two new 47,800-ton, 930-passenger ships to add to their growing fleet of 6 (3 sailing and 3 under construction). There will be an option for two additional ships, bringing the potential fleet size to 10 by the mid-2020's. Viking Ocean Cruises' chairman Torstein Hagen, clearly pleased with the company's performance, stated "Our guests and the industry have spoken, and they love the ocean ships we have built with Fincantieri." The fleet consists of identical vessels featuring only balcony cabins and suites; each ship is decorated with Norwegian art and possesses a Scandinavian sensibility. Viking, originally known for deluxe river cruises, is celebrating 20 years in business in 2017.



Viking Ocean ships are distinguished by crisp Scandinavian design, furniture and artwork, unique to the world's cruising fleet.

(Viking Ocean Cruises)



Two of Viking Ocean Cruises' fleet anchored at Thira, Santorini

(Viking Ocean Cruises)

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