

DECEMBER, 2017 VOLUME XXXIV, # 11

WSS PONY CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAY SEASON and the 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE QUEEN MARY'S LAST VOYAGE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2017 – 12:00 NOON
CAFÉ ARTE, 222 West 73RD Street, Manhattan

Cunard Line's QUEEN MARY completed the final voyage of her storied career when she arrived in Long Beach, California on December 9, 1967. The ship has attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors since her arrival and remains a perennial favorite of ocean liner enthusiasts around the world.

Join us at Arte Café on Saturday, December 9, 2017, from Noon until 3:15pm, as we celebrate the holiday season and the 50th anniversary of the QUEEN MARY's arrival in Long Beach with a three-course lunch and a short film highlighting her launch and pre-war, wartime and post-war service.

We will see the ship under construction in the John Brown shipyard in Clydebank, Scotland. Work ceases for twenty-seven months when money runs out during the Depression. After an agreement with the British Government that consists of the merger of White Star Line with Cunard, work resumes. We will witness the launch and fitting out and tour amenities for its three classes. Following the ship's maiden voyage, we will learn about her severe rolling problems, including one at forty-four degrees and the resultant damage.

We will see QUEEN MARY take the Blue Riband from the NORMANDIE, be converted into a troop ship during World War II and then re-converted into a commercial passenger liner --with stabilizers-- following the war. The two-ship service (QUEEN MARY and QUEEN ELIZABETH) that Cunard had envisioned back in 1926 is finally realized. As the post-war heyday of sea travel succumbs to the speed of air travel, Cunard decides to sell the QUEEN MARY. We will watch her last and longest voyage from Southampton to Long Beach.

We look forward to celebrating the holidays and this special maritime anniversary at Café Arte. Space is still available, so payment for the luncheon will be accepted at the door.



WSS PONY will celebrate the holidays at Café Arte on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. The date, December 9, 2017, will coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the arrival of the QUEEN MARY at Long Beach, California. (Marjorieann Matuszek; Bob Allen)

NEXT EVENTS: Membership meetings: January 26, "Sailing in Two Directions: in the Age of the TITANIC" by William Roka, February 23; March 22, April 27, May 18, June 22 (programs TBD).

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MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Oceania Cruises' INSIGNIA, at Cienfuegos, Cuba on November 18, 2017.

(Mario De Stefano)

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

SHIP	FROM	TO	VOYAGE	PASSENGER(S)	DATE
QUEEN MARY 2	Hamburg	New York	Transatlantic	Karl & Laurel Zimmermann	11/17
QUEEN MARY 2	Hamburg	New York	Transatlantic	Charles & Marjorie Zuckerman	11/17
QUEEN MARY 2	Hamburg	New York	Transatlantic	Ted & Suelyn Scull	11/17
INSIGNIA	Miami	Miami	Cuba	Mario De Stefano & Carol Miles	11/17
AMERICAN QUEEN	Nashville	Memphis	Mississippi River	Tom Cassidy	11/17

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.

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 Seafarer's 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.

A SEASON FOR RENEWAL

Please renew your membership as soon as possible, to avoid missing any of the nautical fun planned for 2018! Membership renewal forms were included with last month's edition of The Porthole.

SHIP'S LOG - OCTOBER

It was Friday, October 27th, four days short of the 50th anniversary of the QUEEN MARY's final Southampton departure, as she headed for a second life in Long Beach, California. To mark the occasion, one of her most avid fans, long-time member Pat Dacey, provided us with an extremely interesting and comprehensive showing of how she spent all those retirement years in Long Beach. He was introduced by Ted Scull, with mention of Pat's 60-plus cruises and ocean voyages, and a description of his extensive career in law enforcement.

Pat regaled us with a professional-grade program of photographs and collages, accompanied by his information-packet commentary. Most of the photos came from various publications and the Internet, but towards the end, his own photography took over.

Describing the QUEEN MARY as the best example of ship preservation, Pat first answered a pressing question: why Long Beach? The city officials were trying to make Long Beach a place that people actually came to instead of just going through, and wanted a centerpiece for a planned pier complex. And they made the winning bid for the ship in mid-1967, beating others including New York City, which wanted to use the QUEEN MARY as a floating high school. The next question: how to get her from Southampton to Long Beach? The procedure morphed from a bare bones, crew-only positioning voyage to what was billed as a celebratory 39-day cruise around Cape Horn. The cruise, operated by Fugazy Travel of New York, used Cunard Line's management and crew. There were doubts that the 31-year-old liner, without air conditioning in her cabins and most public rooms, would be able to attract a full complement of passengers for the tropical voyage, which would cross the equator twice. However, she was an instant sellout – 1,200 passengers signed up, with 200 more on the waiting list. Pat showed us her route, with each port shown as lettering against a relevant scenic background. Then we saw images of the tumultuous welcome the QUEEN MARY received when she arrived in Long beach on December 9, 1967. And another question arose: is the new arrival a ship or a building? The eventual answer – a Class A floating building, which would receive all of her services through connections to land. Despite being categorized as a building, Pat informed us that to date the QUEEN MARY has been the largest moving object to ever to come to Southern California.

During the 3½-year long renovation to convert the QUEEN MARY from an ocean liner to a stationary tourist attraction and hotel, many challenges were overcome. One was the removal of thousands of tons of "debris," i.e. the ship's massive engine, boiler and generator plants, which were the pinnacle of Scottish shipbuilding technology just three decades prior. The ship's three iconic funnels, removed to access the engine spaces, were in a state of near-collapse, and had to be replaced with aluminum facsimiles. In order to make room for exhibits designed by famed oceanographer Jacques Cousteau, many watertight bulkheads and decks were removed to create the appropriate sized venues. Pat showed us photos of how the spaces were carved out of the QUEEN's massive hull, including a network of escalators to connect the halls. These shocking demolition photos were accompanied by what Pat described as "funereal sounding music."

The QUEEN MARY finally opened on May 8, 1971, and was initially mobbed by the public, eager to visit the world famous transatlantic liner. Unfortunately, her good fortune did not last long. The "Living Sea of Jacques Cousteau," despite the gargantuan effort to create its' home on the QUEEN MARY, was not successful and lasted only a few short years. In 1978, the city shifted oversight of the vessel to the Port of Long Beach, thus beginning a long series of changes in leaseholders, owners, managers, etc. Each had their own ideas of how to attract the public to the QUEEN, and how to develop the adjacent land, which was always part of the total development concept. Themed restaurants and an English shopping village were just two ideas that came and went, with varying degrees of success – or not. One idea that met with Pat's approval was the creation of a gourmet restaurant, built in the old engineers' quarters high in the ship's aft superstructure, just above the famed Verandah Grill. Dubbed Sir Winston's, it is still in operation after five decades, and has recently been renovated. Pat was not at all happy about the repurposing of the Verandah Grill, an exquisite a la carte restaurant for QUEEN MARY's first class passengers - it became a hot dog and hamburger stand. He was not delighted either by the redecoration of the glorious Art Deco first class Observation Bar as a Wild West themed bar. More successful was the concept of using the QUEEN as a floating prop for the nearby Hollywood motion picture and television industries. To date, approximately 513 productions have been filmed on board, the most famous of which was the all-star 1972 hit "The Poseidon Adventure." The QUEEN MARY also thrived as an event and wedding venue – 12,000 of the latter performed on board since 1971, and Sunday brunch in the former first class dining room is a cherished Long Beach tradition. Of course, the maritime museum dedicated to the QUEEN MARY's history meets with everyone's approval. It includes the one engine room that was spared demolition, and a huge room built around the QUEEN's one remaining propeller. Here, guests actually walk outside of the ship's hull, and peer down at the propeller slowly turning in the harbor water.

One of the QUEEN MARY's most famous operators was the Walt Disney Company, which took over the lease in 1988. They erected a large geodesic dome next to the ship to house the Spruce Goose, Howard Hughes' H4-Hercules, the largest airplane ever built. Unfortunately, despite this interesting addition, Disney could not come up a profitable formula for the ship and her surrounding land, and gave up the lease in late 1992. At that time, the QUEEN MARY's hotel (consisting mostly of former first class suites and staterooms) closed, followed by the removal of the Spruce Goose, and finally the entire closure of the ship on December 31, 1992. It was the low point in the QUEEN's California career.

The next year, the QUEEN MARY was added to the National Register of Historic Places, and new hotel operator and management teams were sought by the city of Long Beach. The RMS foundation led by Joseph Prevratil took over the lease early in 1993, and the slow uphill climb for the QUEEN began. Management companies came and went over the next dozen years, but progress was made on renovation of the hotel and restoration of some of the ship's antique treasures. Notably, the Verandah Grill was restored, using the original murals and light fixtures which were located in storage rooms. Beautiful teak decking was removed, planed down and reinstalled, and other improvements were made.

In 2016, the City of Long Beach entered into a 66-year lease with Urban Commons, a Los Angeles-based real estate investment company. They have ambitious plans to restore the QUEEN MARY, which has suffered structural damage from decades of deferred maintenance. Although estimates for repairs have come in close to \$300 million, the new leaseholders are convinced that they will actually cost far less. The City of Long Beach allocated \$23 million to address the most critical repairs, which were recently completed. Urban Commons is proceeding with other needed repairs, including a long overdue, complete exterior paint job. A highlight of the paint job is the attempt to match as closely as possible the original Cunard Red for the three great funnels. Renovation and restoration projects are slated for the Verandah Grill and officers' quarters, while there is talk of a new "Cunard Heritage Room." Queen Mary Island is the working name for the retail and commercial development to be built on the 45 acres of land adjacent to the ship. The old Spruce Goose dome, now being partially used for embarkation of cruise ships sailing from the Port of Long Beach, is to be renovated in order to handle additional vessels.

Pat showed us much documentation of the QUEEN MARY's decades in Southern California, including before and after diagrams of the alterations, as well as pictures of her interiors over the years. He also showed us some of the recent exhibits on board: a ship model gallery on the starboard Promenade Deck, and a tribute to Princess Diana, including many selections from her stylish wardrobe. Pat and his wife Denise are frequent visitors to the ship, and attended the 80th Anniversary celebration of the QUEEN MARY's maiden voyage on May 27, 2016, marked by a photo of the smiling couple. In Pat's opinion, things are going in the right direction, and he hopes for a bright future for the QUEEN MARY. We thank him for this masterpiece of a program.

Marge Dovman and Bob Allen



Pat Dacey's program treated us to visuals of the QUEEN MARY's art deco splendor. Clockwise from top left: the sweeping bridge front; the restored Verandah Grill, seen during the annual Art Deco Festival; the Promenade Deck Shopping Center; the Observation Bar. (Bob Allen)

A CROWNING EVENT

On Saturday, November 4th, a beautiful, sunny day, 70-plus PONY Branchers and friends made their way to the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal to visit the 10-year-old Grand Class CROWN PRINCESS. The 116,000-ton vessel, which carries 3,114 passengers, was in the midst of a Canada-to-Florida cruise.

We had the unique experience of boarding through the crew entrance, which was done without the long wait we usually encounter, and members promptly made themselves at home aboard. The official visit began with a tour of the ship for those who wished (or didn't get "lost"), ending up in the Da Vinci Dining Room for a tasty, pleasantly and efficiently served three-course lunch. For the appetizer, we could choose between a salmon and crayfish salad (how do you eat a crayfish, anyway?)

and Princess' signature Fettuccine Alfredo; Entrees were either Trout Almandine or Chateaubriand of Beef Tenderloin. No choice for dessert – only a delicious chocolate-hazelnut soufflé. Coffee and tea were promptly served, quickly followed by those little pastries called gourmandizes. There was ample time for post-prandial exploration before forcing ourselves ashore.

Many thanks to Doug Friedlander for organizing and keeping things going smoothly.

Marge Dovman



PONY members ride the Red Hook Ferry from Manhattan to the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal, en route to the CROWN PRINCESS luncheon on November 4. (Marjorieann Matuszek)

SHIP NEWS

SEASIDE EVE - OH! : A surprise announcement was made by MSC Cruises' executive chairman Pierfrancesco Vago on the eve of the maiden voyage of the new 153,516-ton SEASIDE. During the delivery ceremony at Italy's Fincantieri shipyard, Vago announced a 1.8 billion Euro order for two new ships, dubbed SEASIDE EVO – for Evolution. These expanded SEASIDE-class vessels will be of 169,380-tons, with a larger Yacht Club (i.e. First Class) accommodation, and will carry up to 5,646 passengers. The two ships will be ready for service in 2021 and 2023. In the meantime, the SEASIDE departed Trieste, Italy on November 30, bound for her homeport of Miami, Florida, where she will named by godmother Sophia Loren on December 21, followed by her maiden voyage to the Caribbean on December 23.

THE SKY'S NOT THE LIMIT: Princess Cruises' fourth Royal-class ship will be named SKY PRINCESS, and will enter service in the Mediterranean in the fall of 2019. The 143,700-ton vessel will include all of the features of her US-based sisters ROYAL PRINCESS and REGAL PRINCESS, plus update décor and some as of yet unspecified innovations. The fourth sister, MAJESTIC PRINCESS, is China based and has her own unique facilities. SKY PRINCESS recalls the career of her prior namesake, the 1984-built Sitmar Cruises' FAIRSKY, renamed by Princess when they purchased Sitmar in 1988. A lovely and unusual ship, SKY PRINCESS was the last liner to be built with steam turbines. She only served with Princess until 2000, then became PACIFIC SKY for P&O Australia for the next six years. Sold to Pullmantur in 2006, she operated as SKY WONDER until 2008. After that, she only operated sporadically, and was scrapped in 2013 at the relatively young age of 29. It was her steam power plant, antiquated almost from her first days, that was a major contributing factor in her demise.



The naming of Princess Cruises' new ship SKY PRINCESS recalls an earlier ship of the line with the same name. Here she is, seen as Sitmar's FAIRSKY in Mexican waters in March 1986. (Bob Allen)

STILL A SOVEREIGN: Pullmantur’s SOVEREIGN, the 30-year old former Royal Caribbean SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS, has just completed a 3-week, 20 million euro renovation at Navantia Shipyard in Cadiz, Spain. The world’s largest and most innovative passenger ship at the time of her 1988 maiden voyage, she is now considered mid-sized at 73,529-tons. Interestingly, she joined the Pullmantur fleet in 2008, just as the SKY WONDER was phased out.



Pullmantur’s SOVEREIGN is still going strong in her 30th year, and has just been revitalized for continued service in the Spanish market. (Pullmantur Cruises)

GALAPAGOS CELEBRITY: Celebrity Cruises has announced a new ship for their highly successful Galapagos Islands cruises, to be named CELEBRITY FLORA. The 5,739-ton, 100-passenger vessel will about twice the size of CELEBRITY EXPEDITON, which she will replace on year-round itineraries out of Baltra, Ecuador. Currently under construction at De Hoop shipyard in The Netherlands, CELEBRITY FLORA’s maiden voyage is set for spring, 2019. Her style and design will complement that of the new CELEBRITY EDGE, which will begin service a few months earlier, in December 2018. The new expedition vessel will be the largest ever built for Galapagos Islands service



CELEBRITY FLORA will be the largest ship built for Galapagos cruising when introduced in 2019. (Celebrity Cruises)

CUBA CRUISES CONTINUE: The latest travel restrictions from Washington, DC have not affected the regulations regarding “people to people” cruises to the Cuba, which continues to be a growing market. Royal Caribbean has just announced that they will increase their popular sailings to the island. The MAJESTY OF THE SEAS will offer four and five-night voyages from both Tampa and Ft. Lauderdale, starting in April 2018. She will join the EMPRESS OF THE SEAS, which is currently operating a year-round schedule of Cuba cruises from Miami.

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