THE PORTHOLE

PORT OF NEW YORK BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY

FEBRUARY, 2010 **VOLUME XXVI, # 2**

Thursday February 25, 2010 at 6:00 PM
Community Church – Assembly Room
40 East 35th Street (Between Park and Madison Avenues)

RMS CARONIA – CUNARD LINE'S GREEN GODDESS

A WORLD CRUISE FILM AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND BY ALLAN JORDAN

This 28-minute film is a charmingly old-fashioned look at luxury cruising in the early 1960s aboard the Green Goddess, RMS Caronia. The narrator is John Barnsby, a regular voice for the Cunard Line. World Ship member Richard Faber has very kindly supplied the film.

The 100-day cruise calls at 23 ports in 17 countries. Besides plentiful scenes aboard ship showing passengers, cabins, dining, deck games, and costume balls, we will see what the following ports looked like almost 50 years ago: Bahia (Salvador), Cape Town, Zanzibar, Colombo, Bangkok, Bali, Hong Kong, Hawaii, Acapulco, Panama City, the Canal, and return to New York after visiting what Barnsby calls "strange and foreign ports."

To introduce the film and provide a thumbnail history of this innovative ship, we have invited Allan Jordan, a lecturer aboard cruise ships and writer about the history and future of shipping. With illustrative material, he will trace Caronia's illustrious history from entry into service in January 1949 until she was sold by Cunard in 1968 and then sadly wrecked off Guam in the South Pacific in 1974.

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NEXT MEETINGS: Friday March 26; Friday, April 30;
Thursday May 20; Friday June 25
Cruise to Halifax and Boston on the **QUEEN MARY 2**: July 1-6

WEB SITE:
www.worldshipny.com

THE PORTHOLE, published by the Port of New York Branch, World Ship Society, welcomes original material for publication. Address to the editor, Marjorie Dovman. Opinions expressed are those of the author only and not of the PONY branch or THE PORTHOLE.

SHIP'S LOG

Our January meeting began with the official changing of the watch. Ted Scull offered thanks to our outgoing chairman, David Hume, in the process giving a sort of State of the Branch report. David in turn acknowledged Ted's thanks and gave his own appreciation of the Board members' work in keeping the PONY Branch shipshape. As a parting gift, David was given a print of a Robert Lloyd painting showing the QE2 and QM2 together. He was followed on the bridge by newly elected chairman Carol Miles, who welcomed us all and thanked David for his past leadership and Ted for all his work on the programs and the website.

To begin the actual program, Jennifer Zimmermann, daughter of speaker Karl Zimmermann, introduced her father with some biographical notes. Karl - a ship and train enthusiast, writer and photographer extraordinaire - launched his program with a photo of his six-year-old self on the deck of the ILE DE FRANCE with his father, who was pointing into the distance, possibly to Karl's future ship interest. Karl described how liner travel became a family activity, although any ship interest of his became dormant until it was reawakened in the 1980's.

Karl's very interesting program was a parade of old-time liners, literally too numerous to mention, along with a charming family chronicle. Some favorites, ranging through the years, include the BREMEN, EUROPA, ROTTERDAM and STEFAN BATORY.

Over the years, the Zimmermanns could be seen at captain's dinners, around the dining table, at ease in their cabin and other favorite spots.

Karl took pains to tell us several times that he was not at that point a ship buff, nor was he photographing. However, in 1983, with his interest rekindled, it finally occurred to him that he ought to be taking pictures. The results were definitely worth waiting for, as Karl showed us quite a few striking shots. The boat deck being a favorite family location, there were artistic boat deck photos, as well as very good interiors.

To Karl, the end of the QE2 signaled the end of an era, and the QUEEN MARY 2 qualifies as "another great ocean liner."

For photographically helping us revisit so may old favorites, Karl received a copy of "The Liner - Retrospective and Renaissance" by Philip Dawson.

This was not the end. After Bill Miller introduced David Gibson of the Art Deco Society, who invited us to his society's February 13th preview of the South Street Seaport's NORMANDIE exhibit, Bill led us in celebrating the 85th birthday of Richard Morse, charter member, former treasurer and longest serving board member. The birthday cake, a sweet cake with strawberry-lined icing, was delicious!

Marge Dovman

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

NORWEGIAN GEM is popular with local cruisers looking for a warm weather break. Recent voyagers on this New York-based ship were **Karl & Laurel Zimmermann** and **Mario & Anne Bozzolo**, all sailing to Florida and the Bahamas. Trans-Atlantic voyagers on the **QUEEN VICTORIA** were **Ernie Raab** and **Howard Abrams & Harold Clinton. Warren Forbes** was on the **SILVER CLOUD**, cruising the southern Caribbean from Ft. Lauderdale to Barbados.

WELCOME ABOARD!

A warm welcome to our newest members: **Susan Roy, Dave Fortunato, Paula Stark.**

POSTED ON BOARD

To: WSS Pony membership
From: Richard Morse
Subject: Surprise party for No. 85 - 29 January 2010

You can imagine my complete surprise, after the program of Jan. 29, to find my 85th birthday being observed by the entire branch membership, cake and all. To say that it was unexpected would be a masterpiece of understatement. It would be like expecting to see the DE GRASSE, and finding the NORMANDIE!!

I am completely mystified as to how you got all those signatures together, behind my back, as it were. That "BIRTHDAY CARD" is suitable for framing!

Once again, thank you all; you made turning 85 a "piece of cake," no pun intended!

With Gratitude
Richard K. Morse
4 February 2010

OUR NEW WEBSITE

The PONY website, after an unfortunate hiatus, is being updated, and the complete 2010 schedules of cruise ship arrivals and departures have been posted. Additional archival, resource and photographic material converted to the new design will be forthcoming shortly. The editor and webmaster invite your comments and corrections. Contact us at wsspony@gmail.com.

WHAT A SITE!

Have you wondered when your ship will come in? Then you should consider checking out this website: http://www.marinetraffic.com/ais/default.aspx?level0=100. At Marine Traffic.com, you can spot the current location of any ship worldwide, with information about the vessel, her heading, speed, etc. There's also a link to great photos of the identified ship!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We know that many of you have great stories about your cruises, maritime interests, collections and other topics of interest to WSS PONY members. To contribute to the Porthole, just contact Marge Dovman at a meeting or via the P.O. box. Web site contact is David Sykes, who may be contacted the same way or via e-mail.

JOIN WSS AT SEA

Join our July 4 Holiday Weekend Cruise, sailing July 1 on the QUEEN MARY 2, from Brooklyn to Halifax and Boston. For details, contact Brad Hatry at Pisa Brothers Travel, 212-265-8420 ext. 222

YOUR DAILY PROGRAMME

VANCOUVER WSS

If you're visiting Vancouver, BC the local branch of WSS will have its next meeting on Wednesday, March 10. The program will be "Warbuilt Standard Ships in Peacetime". Meetings are held at the Vancouver Maritime Museum at 1905 Ogden Avenue (Kitsilano Point). For additional information if you visit, contact Glen Smith: 604-684-1240, e-mail glenn.smith@worldshipsocietyvan.ca.

STATEN ISLAND MUSEUM

The Staten Island Museum will feature the exhibit "Staten Island Ferry: The First 100 Years of Municipal Service." See the story of the ferry operation, view the new Diverman and explore the history, art, people and sites of this floating icon. The museum is at 75 Stuyvesant Place, Staten Island NY 10301; for more information call 718-727-1135 ext. 113.

TUESDAY EVENING HOUR, INC - SLIDE SHOW LECTURES

The March 9 show will be "Overview of New Jersey Shipwrecks", by Dan Lieb, diver and shipwreck historian. Program is at 49 Fulton Street, starting at 6:00 PM; a $2 donation is requested. For more information, call 212-964-3936 or online at www.tuesdayeveninghour.com.

SWANN GALLERY AUCTION

The Swann Auction Galley will feature an auction of The Christopher Bou Collection of Ocean Liner and Aviation Memorabilia on Thursday, March 4, 2010 at 10:30 AM and 3:00 PM. Preview exhibition of posters, prints, artifacts, advertising and shipboard ephemera to be auctioned will be held at the gallery at 104 East 25th Street, New York, NY 10010-2977. Times of the preview are Saturday February 27 (10 AM to 4 PM) and Monday March 1 through Wednesday March 3 (10 AM to 6 PM); the catalogue is available for $35. For more information, call 212-254-4710, ext. 17, or e-mail ggarland@swanngalleries.co. View catalogues and bid online at www.swanngalleries.com.

AT SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM

An exciting new exhibit is opening at the Seaport on February 18, 2010: "Decodence: Legendary Interiors and Illustrious Travelers Aboard the s.s. NORMANDIE." Guided tours of the exhibit are available on Saturday February 20 and 27 at 12:30-1:30 PM and 2:30-3:30 PM, at 12 Fulton Street. Also, continuing at the Seaport are "Treasures of a President: FDR and the Sea" and "Monarchs of the Sea: Celebrating the Ocean Liner Era." For more information, call 212-748-8786, e-mail reservations@southstseaport.org or go online to www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org.

PRESERVING THE PEGASUS

The vintage 1907 tug PEGASUS has been successfully restored, but the need to maintain and preserve the vessel is ongoing. Currently, she needs an adjustment on the shaft; $20,000 will have to be raised by April in order for the PEGASUS to carry on her mission and be fully functioning this spring. To learn more about the PEGASUS programs and events for 2010 and donate to this cause, visit www.tugpegasus.org, or write to their new address: Tug Pegasus Preservation Project, PO Box 3433, New York, NY 10008.

GUEST EDITOR

Marge Dovman continues to enjoy a long and well-deserved rest; Bob Allen is still manning the Editor's desk in her absence. We all look forward to the day she is back on the bridge, commanding these pages!

OOPS! CORRECTIONS!

Sincere apologies for a couple of recent blunders. A pink renewal slip was accidentally included with the January Porthole to all members. A letter explaining the mistake was sent subsequently, along with pink slips only to those members with dues outstanding. Also, meeting dates were incorrect on the front page of the same issue; please note corrected dates in this issue.

SHIP NEWS

- The Port of Palm Beach, FL will once again have regularly scheduled cruise service. Celebration Cruise Line's BAHAMAS CELEBRATION (ex-PRINSESSE RAGNHILD) will move there from her homeport of Ft. Lauderdale on March 15. Currently undertaking a year-round schedule of two-night cruises to Nassau, she will change her itinerary to call at Freeport on Grand Bahama Island. BAHAMAS CELEBRATION replaced the vintage REGAL EMPRESS, now being scrapped, on this short but popular cruise program.
- The QUEEN ELIZABETH 2 may be offered for sale by Istithmar World, the Dubai company that owns the former Cunarder. Financial troubles in the region and with parent company Dubai World have been in the business press for several months.
- The MONA LISA, formerly OCEANIC II, VICTORIA, SEA PRINCESS and KUNGSHOLM made an appearance in British Columbia, Canada, where she will be a hotel ship for the Winter Olympics. This summer will be her last season operating for Lord Nelson Seereisen, catering to the German market. It is believed that there are some talks in progress between her current owners and the Swedish city of Gothenburg, regarding her possible sale for use as a floating hotel in her former homeport.
- Carnival Cruise Line's CARNIVAL MIRACLE suffered a 15-foot hole in her hull following a collision with the pier at Port Zante, St. Kitts in late January. There were no injuries and repairs were made quickly, enabling the ship to stay on schedule for her next cruise.
- After the devastating earthquake in Haiti, some in the news media questioned the morality of passengers vacationing in the sun just 60 miles form the death and suffering in Port au Prince. Royal Caribbean owns a private beach in Labadee, Haiti and resumed calls there shortly after the huge earthquake. A headline in the New York Post on January 19th read "Ship of Ghouls - Cruisers frolic 60 miles from rotting bodies." However, Royal Caribbean CEO Richard Fain as well Caribbean-based tourism and government officials were quick to point out that the cruise line was keeping hundreds of people employed at Labadee. Also, the cruise ships were delivering desperately needed food and water to the stricken area. Royal Caribbean has made a huge investment the Haitian port since the 1980's, and also reportedly donated $1 million to relief efforts.
- There was a "Tea Party" on the CARNIVAL LIBERTY - but not the kind with scones and cucumber sandwiches. Over 100 members of the ultra-conservative political group cruised to the Eastern Caribbean on the ship from January 9 - 16.

REMEMBERING THE ORIANA
Bill Miller

Thirty years ago, on a warm August afternoon in 1979, the ORIANA of P&O Cruises called at New York for the very first time. Dressed in flags and tooting horns to signal vessels, she was visiting as part of a three-week cruise --- "Voyage to the New World" as P&O's London sales department dubbed it. I was aboard as a lecturer and we sailed the great northern route from Southampton, touching at Reykjavik, Corner Brook, Halifax and Boston. There were 1,700 British passengers aboard and a handful of Americans. A boatload of WSS members sailed out to meet the white-hulled liner as she sailed past the lower Brooklyn shoreline. Indeed, photographers were in high form. The ORIANA aroused considerable interest - she was then, after all, the third-largest liner in service (only her fleetmate CANBERRA and QE2 were larger).

When she was completed in December 1960, the 41,000-ton ORIANA of Britain's P&O-Orient Line was the largest passenger liner yet built for the busy UK - Australia run. Carrying up to 2,180 passengers - 580 in first class and 1,650 in tourist class - the 27-1/2 knot ship was also notably the very fastest in the "Down Under" liner trade - she could do the Southampton - Sydney run via Suez in 21 days, a full week less than previous P&O-Orient liners. Immediately, she was immensely popular and very successful. Every sailing was, it seemed, full to capacity. Built by the Vickers-Armstrong Shipyard at Barrow-in-Furness, in northwest England, the 804-foot liner was built in what came to be the final great age of British-built, British-owned liners. Others included the likes of the WINDSOR CASTLE, the EMPRESS OF CANADA and finally the QUEEN ELIZABETH 2. British shipbuilding was losing its long-prominent place to less expensive, more efficient shipbuilders. Meanwhile, the sleek ORIANA was soon to begin a losing battle of her own, with speedy jets on the Australian run. Six months later, in June 1961, P&O added an even larger liner, the 44,000-ton CANBERRA. She could carry even more passengers, over 2,270 in all.

"The ORIANA was my preference over the CANBERRA," according to Howard Franklin, who sailed in both ships on many occasions. "The ORIANA, as it seemed, all graciousness and luxury, and lots of carpets whereas the CANBERRA, it seemed, was more informal and acres of lino. However, I was amazed in tourist class on the ORIANA by the low ceilings in the public rooms and small, even tiny cabins. Originally, the ORIANA had a Silver Grill in first class, but that space was later made into cabins. The Monkey Bar Garden felt like you were suspended over the ocean itself. She also had a great enclosed promenade area. And more specifically, I remember the enormous proportion of the drinks served onboard. There was especially great excitement on sailing days and great reunions and meetings of past passengers. The commodore of the Orient Line was aboard and was very precise, very exacting."

The twin-screw ORIANA actually sailed the world. While her mainstay was so-called "line voyages" out to Fremantle, Melbourne and Sydney, she also sailed to such ports as Auckland, Hong Kong, Yokohama, San Francisco, Acapulco, Nassau, Ft. Lauderdale, Lisbon and Athens. She often went cruising as well --- on two-week itineraries from Southampton to Mediterranean ports, to the Norwegian fjords and on three-week jaunts over to the Caribbean and back. She actually returned to New York one more time, in the summer of 1980, on another trans-Atlantic cruise.

As that original Australian trade was faltering by the late 1960's, the ORIANA actually converted to a full-time, one-class cruise ship in 1973. She was based at Southampton for eight months of the year, at Sydney for the remaining four. After 1981, she was based in Australia for year-round cruising. "I attended the UK farewell luncheon aboard ORIANA at Southampton" added Howard Franklin. "Princess Alexandra, who had named the ship at her launching in December 1959, was there as well. The ORIANA actually didn't convert to a one-class cruise ship as well as the CANBERRA. The CANBERRA was actually the better one-class ship." Myself, I was aboard for a fifteen-day cruise from Sydney to the South Pacific islands in July 1984 and heard whispers that her P&O days were indeed numbered. Along with the usual decreasing economics for an aging passenger liner, it was whispered in some circles that she was simply "wearing out." Two years later and while some rather elaborate rumors suggested that she might even be reconstructed as a huge car carrier, she was sold to Japanese buyers, who made her over as a museum and tourist attraction at Beppu in southern Japan. Sadly, it was all a financial disaster and, in the summer of 1995, she was sold to the Chinese, who first used her for floating housing, then as a hotel in Shanghai and then later, searching for a suitable role, finally as an entertainment and recreation center at Dalain. She capsized, however, when a fierce typhoon struck Dalian in June 2004. Later righted, at age 45 she was beyond reasonable repairs and was towed off. Scarred with rust and streaked with mud, she was broken up at remote Zhangjiagang.

THE FOLLOWING ARE MEMBERS OF HONORARY, PATRON AND SUSTAINING LEVELS FOR 2010:

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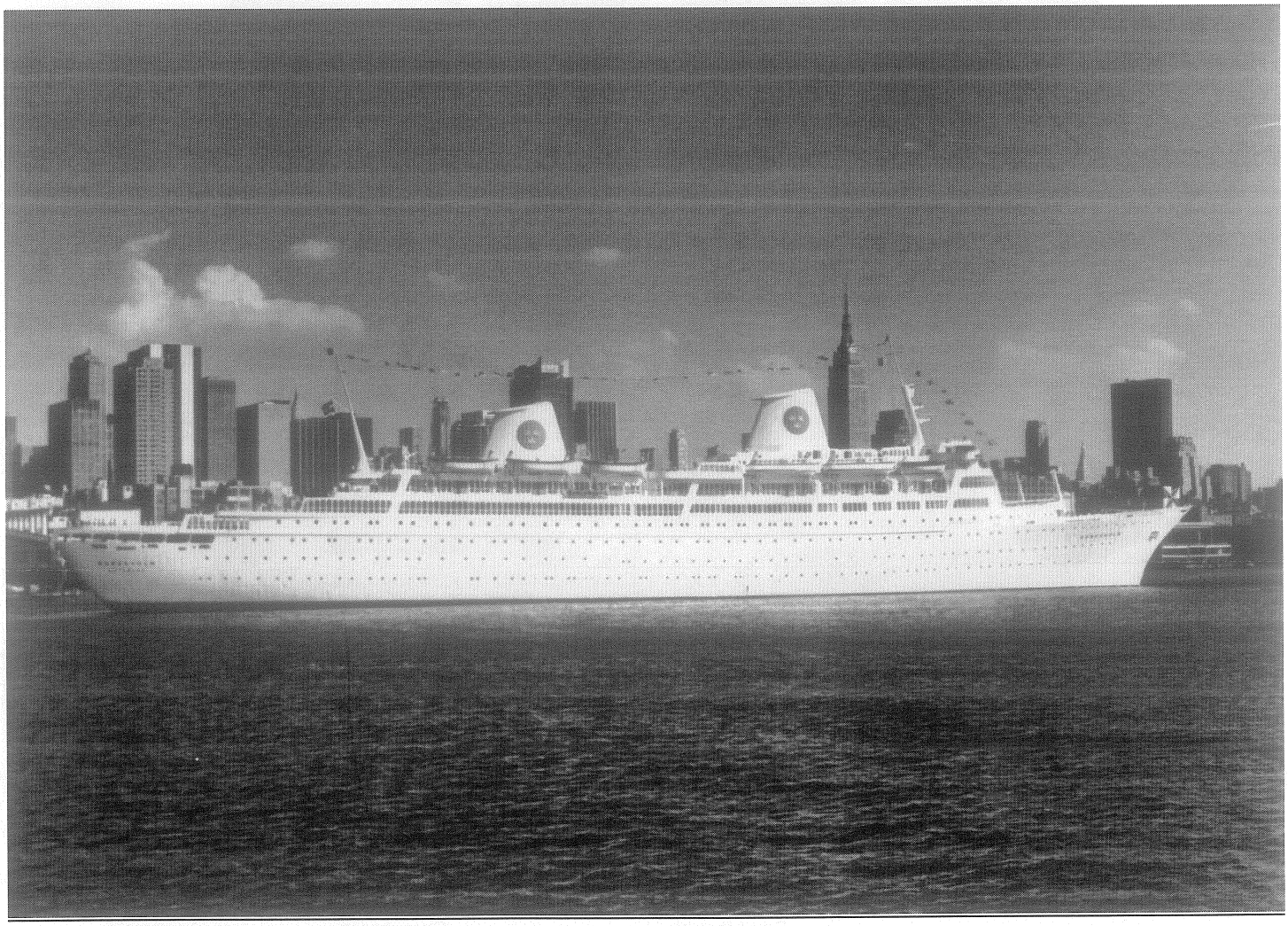

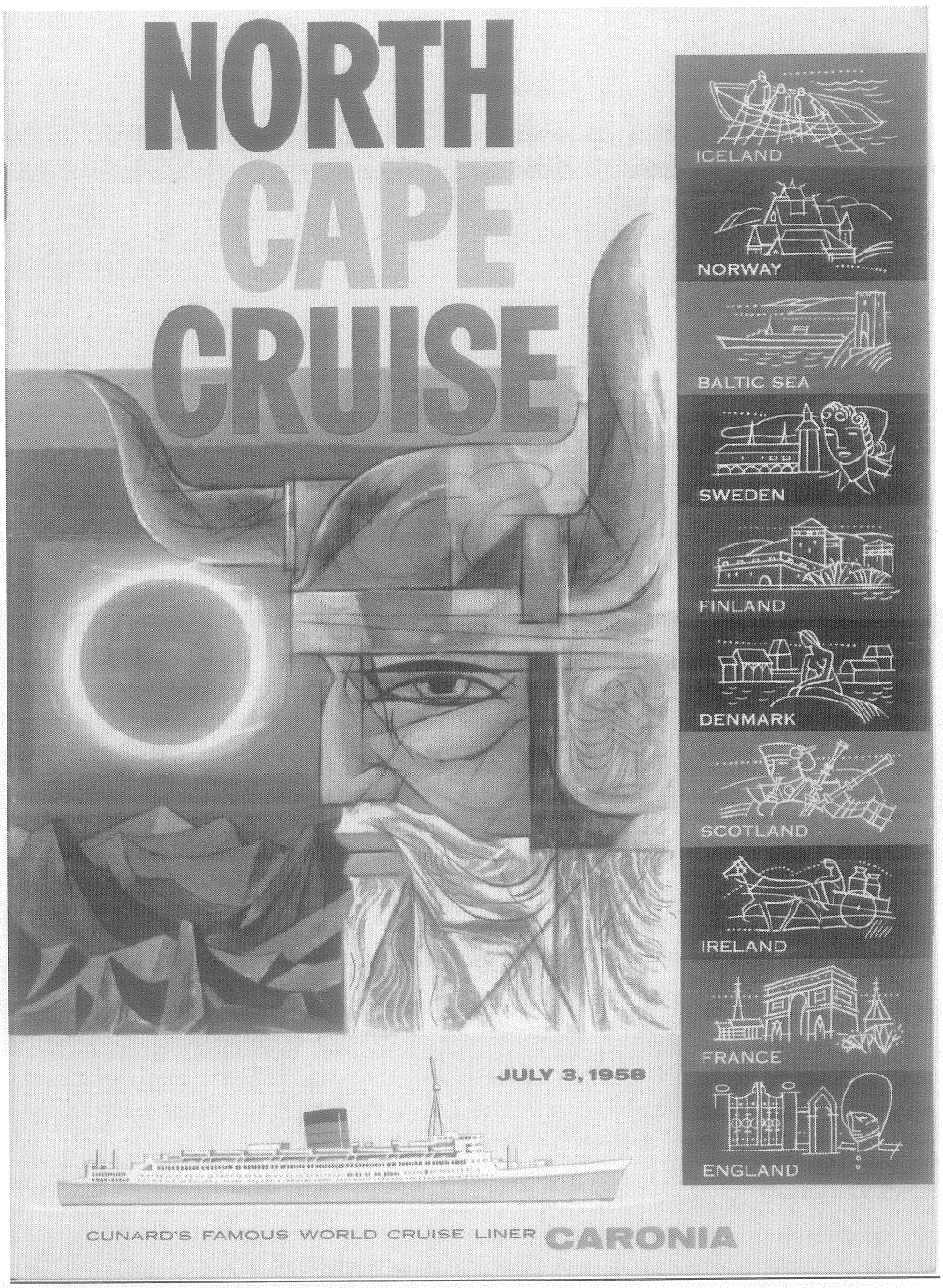

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