



Friday, November 21, 2014 - 6:00 PM
Community Church Assembly Room, 40 East 35th Street, Manhattan

THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE SHIPS

Chosen by PONY Branch Members

A half-dozen presenters have offered to share with us their favorite ships drawn from whatever criteria they wish to pursue. Doug Newman will act as emcee to engage the speakers and audience in a freewheeling discussion of the choices. We may also hear about some ships that would never make it.

One contributor says that in selecting my favorite ships of those I've sailed on, I realized that they share some similar characteristics. They generally both look and feel like ships, possessing promenades and ample deck space so you're never far removed from the ocean -- the fact that you're on a ship at sea is a focus of the experience, not an afterthought. Another approaches it this way: "My part of the program will include ten favorites, one per decade of the 20th Century. These liners will represent many of the world's shipbuilding nations and serve diverse routes. They will be significant due to their design and/or impact on ocean liner and cruise ship history." A third's favorite ships range from classic liners to modern cruise ships, and ships that are somewhere in between. He's chosen them for reasons ranging from decor to on-board atmosphere. A fourth is characteristically vague as he says the choices will be a little bit here, a little bit there, ships I've seen and ships I wish I'd seen.

The presenters are at the time of publication: Doug Newman, Bob Allen, Stuart Gewitzman, Wendy and Bob Reilly, Paul Immerman, and Tom Rinaldi.

The emcee will see that the audience has an opportunity to chime in with their picks, so be prepared to share yours.



Favorites all, clockwise from top left: QUEEN ELIZABETH 2, 1969 (Bill Miller collection); NIEUW AMSTERDAM, 1938 (Bill Miller collection); KUNGSHOLM, 1966 (Bob Allen collection) and AQUITANIA, 1914 (Bob Allen collection). Will our presenters include them in their selections? Which are your favorite ships? Find out at our next membership meeting!

NEXT EVENTS: Holiday Party, Saturday December 13, venue TBD.

ADDRESS: PO Box 384, New York, NY 101085-0384

E-MAIL: wsspony@gmail.com

WEBSITE: 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, Bob Allen, at oceanvoyag@aol.com or via the PONY mailing address.



MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Plantours' HAMBURG at Quebec, Canada on September 23, 2014.

(Marjorieann Matuszek)

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 917-492-3379.

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. The next meeting is on Wednesday, December 10, 2014.

NEW SOUTH WALES WSS: Meetings are held at the Uniting Church Complex in Lord Street, Roseville at 8:00 PM. Contact the branch at PO Box 215, Strathfield, New South Wales 2135, Australia.

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.liberty-ship.com or 410-558-0164

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 44th 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 44th 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 upcoming 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, such as 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

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

SHIP	FROM	TO	VOYAGE	PASSENGER(S)	DATE
AZAMARA QUEST	Athens	Istanbul	Black Sea	Carol Miles and Mario De Stefano	08/14
VIKING AKUN	Moscow, Russia	St. Petersburg, Russia	Waterways of the Tsars	Ann & Don Eberle	06/14
QUEEN MARY 2	New York	New York	Arctic Circle Discovery	Ann & Don Eberle	07/14
QUEEN MARY 2	New York	New York	New England & Canada July 4 th	Martin Pietrusiewicz	07/14
AMERICAN EMPRESS	Portland, OR	Clarkston, WA	SNAKE and Columbia Rivers	Tom Cassidy	09/14
ZAANDAM	Vancouver	Vancouver	Hawaiian Islands	Matt Jacobs	09/14
QUEEN MARY 2	New York	New York	New England & Canada	Dieter Killinger	10/14
INDEPEN.. O/T SEAS	Southampton	Southampton	English Channel Ports	Shaun Witten and Family	10/14
ROYAL PRINCESS	New York	New York	New England & Canada	Tom Cassidy	10/14
ROYAL PRINCESS	New York	New York	New England & Canada	Bill Miller	10/14
QUEEN MARY 2	Cherbourg	New York	Transatlantic	Ted & Suellyn Scull	10/14
REGAL PRINCESS	Ft. Lauderdale	Ft. Lauderdale	Bahamas Inaugural	Tom Cassidy	11/14

SHIP'S LOG - SEPTEMBER

Chairman Ted Scull welcomed us back to a new season in September, and with a brief biography introduced the evening's speaker, another of our multi-talented members, Richard Wagner. Dick has a background in law and journalism; along with practicing law for 20 years, he has written about Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. as well as maritime matters.

In a PowerPoint presentation punctuated by archival illustrations, Dick drew on his legal experience to take us through the legal ramifications of the TITANIC sinking. Before the CARPATHIA had even arrived with survivors, an American investigative committee was formed, to be followed by a British one later. Not surprisingly, there were many lawsuits centering on the liability for the disaster. As Dick described the differences between the American and British limit-of-liability laws, we could see why the White Star Line tried to avoid responsibility. As the case made its way through the various levels of the United States courts, it was generally agreed that British statutes applied. It finally arrived at the Supreme Court, and the legal hands of Justice Holmes (a veteran of 22 Atlantic crossings, mainly on Cunard). He found not only that the situation was governed by British law, but that if the owners were directly involved in the negligence, limit-of-liability laws didn't apply. As a result, White Star Line paid out \$664,000 (\$15 million today), and each of the claimants received about two-thirds of their claim, for an average payment of \$1,000.

Dick then went on to the August 1992 collision between the QUEEN ELIZABETH 2 and an uncharted pile of rocks. Once again he mined his personal experience, this time as a passenger on one of his 70+ voyages on the ship, enhanced by his own color photography. The trip started normally enough. We saw a glimpse of the first ports – Saint John, New Brunswick and Halifax. Then came the fateful call at Martha's Vineyard, where the QE2 anchored out. Heading out to sea after the visit, the ship suddenly began to shake; it had run over and decapitated two uncharted rocks. How did this happen? The vessel sailed late, mainly because tenders trying to return sightseeing passengers back aboard had been delayed by both large swells and by boaters doing their own sightseeing around the QUEEN and getting in the way. For whatever reason, the pilot changed the course slightly. When the second officer complained, the captain returned to the original course. This deviation led to the ship/rocks rendezvous. The rocks were not on the charts due to the government soundings having been taken intermittently instead of continuously. The charts showed a depth of 39', the ship's draft was 32' and the rocks were 33' high. Then there's the phenomenon known as squat: when a ship sails through shallow water at high speed, it sinks lower in the water. The result: a long gash in the hull, a hole in the keel; and some flooding. Water got in the fuel tanks, mixing with the fuel, and shot up through the funnel, staining bulkheads along with clothing of whoever was on deck.

Dick arrived on deck in the morning to see oil on the water and the vessel surrounded by a floatation boom. With the Coast Guard refusing to let the ship proceed to New York because of the oil leak, the next step was Abandon Ship. So after breakfast the passengers disembarked and were taken by ferry to Newport, where they were put on busses and sent to Providence where they were loaded onto five Amtrak trains for New York. Their luggage went a more direct route, by FedEx.

As for the ship, it was taken to the World War I-vintage drydock in Boston that had recently closed; a retiree was called in to re-open it, and 200 shipyard workers got their jobs back, at least long enough to put temporary plates over the holes. The ship was then sent to Blohm & Voss in Germany, where the temporary plates were replaced by permanent ones. This encounter cost Cunard \$20 million in damage plus 11 cancelled trips.

While it's hard to decide on appropriate refreshments for a leaking ship, the galley crew did its (or their) usual good work, for which we thank them. We also appreciate Dick's on-the-spot reporting and you-are-there photography, giving us a taste of adventure we may or may not wish to have ourselves.

Marge Dovman

IT WAS A ROYAL TIME

On Saturday, October 25, World Ship Society, PONY Branch, welcomed over 130 members and guests to a luncheon on the new ROYAL PRINCESS. It was a brilliant fall day in New York, as we explored Princess Cruises' new ship, docked in the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal. A full report of the day will follow in the December Porthole.



ROYAL PRINCESS at her Brooklyn dock on a cloudless October day, when she welcomed 133 World Ship PONY guests for lunch. (Bob Allen)

SHIP NEWS

A GROUNDING WEEKEND: Two cruise ships ran aground over the first weekend of November. On Saturday November 1, CMV's MARCO POLO was under direction of the local pilot and overshot her pier in the Lofoten archipelago in Norway and settled onto a soft mud bank. Fortunately, the 49-year-old liner was built with an ice-strengthened hull for her service from Leningrad to Montreal as ALEKSANDR PUSHKIN. After two attempts, she was refloated without damage to her hull, and resumed her 14-night cruise. A more serious incident involved the BAHAMAS CELEBRATION (ex-PRINSESSE RAGNIHILD), which operates two-day cruises from Palm Beach, FL to the Bahamas. On Friday October 31, she struck an unidentified object after departing Freeport, Bahamas and sustained damage to her hull, causing a 10-degree list to port. She was subsequently towed back to Freeport, and assessed for damage; all passengers and crew were disembarked without injury. After spending the night in local hotels, passengers were returned to Miami aboard the BIMINI SUPERFAST. Celebration Cruise Line has cancelled all sailings for the first two weeks of November while repairs are made to the BAHAMAS CELEBRATION.

COSTA RESURRECTION: As the almost three-year saga of the COSTA CONCORDIA sinking and remarkable salvage recedes into the past, Costa Cruises inaugurated their newest and largest ship, the 135,000-ton COSTA DIADEMA on November 1st. Costa is also in the process of renovating and expanding their 1992-built COSTA CLASSICA as COSTA NeoCLASSICA, due to debut on December 18. An even older vessel, the 1987-built GRAND CELEBRATION (ex-CARNIVAL CELEBRATION) will join the fleet on November 22 as COSTA CELEBRATION, due to Costa's absorption of Spanish-market Iberocruises.



The 27-year-old, 47,000-ton COSTA CELEBRATION, still featuring the Carnival's signature winged funnel, will join the fleet on November 22. (Costa Cruises)

A CARNIVAL AT CRUISE & MARITIME VOYAGES: CMV has been very successful over the last few years with their model of low cost cruises from UK ports on smaller, older liners. They have chartered an additional ship for the 2015 season, the former Carnival Cruises' HOLIDAY of 1985. The 46,000-ton vessel was the first Carnival "Superliner," and their second newly built vessel. She was the first Carnival liner to feature a double-width indoor promenade linking the major public rooms, a two-deck high, multi-level show lounge in the forward superstructure, and cabins with windows instead of portholes – all revolutionary features in 1985. She will be rechristened MAGELLAN, and is set to debut on a Solar Eclipse and Northern Lights cruise from London Tilbury on March 15, 2015, just two months after the maiden voyage of fleet mate AZORES (ex-STOCKHOLM). MAGELLAN will be CMV's largest ship yet with accommodations for 1,250, reduced from her current capacity of 1,400 to allow more single-occupancy cabins. Like COSTA CELEBRATION, MAGELLAN's sale to CMV is a result of Carnival Corporation's move to liquidate Spanish-market Iberocruises, where the vessel currently operates as GRAND HOLIDAY. Once famous for her wildly garish interiors, such as the "Blue Grotto" Lounge with an undulating backlit plastic ceiling, contemporary photos reveal rebuilt, toned-down interiors, with none of Carnival's decorative excesses intact. Perhaps MAGELLAN will receive additional refurbishment to meet the expectations of CMV's mature British clientele.



MAGELLAN, as she will look in her new livery. Apparently Carnival will remove the funnel wings (as they did with JUBILEE) before the transfer to CMV. (CMV)

DEUTSCHLAND DEBACLE: The operating company for Reederei Peter Deilmann's DEUTSCHLAND filed for insolvency in October. Financial restructuring of the company is underway, and cruise operations of the single-ship luxury fleet are continuing. A scheduled renovation of the 16-year-old DEUTSCHLAND begins in November, followed by a world cruise in December. Peter Deilmann's management team is confident that the required corporate refinancing will be successful, and report that bookings for 2015 are strong. Since the death of founder Peter Deilmann in 2003, the company has faced numerous financial challenges.

RATIFICATION OF OFFICERS FOR THE WORLD SHIP SOCIETY PONY BRANCH 2015/2016 TERM

The Ratification of Officers for the 2015/2016 term is included with this month's issue of The Porthole. Please complete and return by November 30, 2014.

MARCO POLO: A Classic Survivor, A Classic Joy

Greg Fitzgerald

Crossing the Thames on the Tilbury Ferry on a rainy, typically British day, the air took a mournful gloom, dark over Gravesend behind us. It brooded motionlessly over the strongly-sheared ex-Soviet ship growing ever closer in front of me, and I came to the realization that this might be one of the last times I would approach a true classic ocean liner before boarding it myself.

Throughout my seven-year cruising career, I've been able to sail in a decent number of the remaining classic liners, considering this career began around the time of SOLAS 2010's parade to Alang. *Queen Elizabeth 2. Regal Empress. Lofoten.* And now, *Marco Polo*.

Built in 1965 as the Baltic Shipping Company's *Aleksandr Pushkin*, Cruise and Maritime Voyages' *Marco Polo* is one of five "Poet-class" liners built to give the Soviet Union an extra source of income from its transatlantic trade voyages to Montreal. The others have all met assorted demises, from fire to scrapping, yet *Marco Polo* sails on – a major 1993 refit keeping her in agreement with today's safety regulations. She continues to have a very successful career, chartered to various British-market lines after a successful fifteen-year career with premium exploration cruise company Orient Lines. Her icebreaker hull and open decks make her suitable for temperatures from the Antarctic to the Amazonian.

I was traveling on a four-night "Bank Holiday Treat" voyage around the English Channel, calling at Amsterdam, Zeebrugge (for Bruges) and Honfleur. In the first two ports I explored the cities, cycling around Amsterdam and going to Sunday Mass at the cathedral in Bruges. In Honfleur, we hired a car and drove out to Omaha Beach, an experience all the more moving with the impending 70th anniversary of D-Day the following month.

Of our 800 passengers, only twenty were not British. Many of those twenty were expats living in the United Kingdom, including the only other American onboard. My friend and travelling companion, a German native, spent some of the voyage chatting with several members of the

crew – especially those who had worked on CMV’s bi-lingual *Astor* – who took every opportunity they could to brush up on their German. The two of us were definitely oddities; the 780 Britons seemed to be mostly middle-class people taking advantage of the bank holiday. Several people I talked to had done several of these short holiday sailings, and CMV’s drive-to-the-port setup – similar to Carnival’s post-9/11 tactic, but with a rotation of ports and fewer ships – combined with reasonable prices make these cruises accessible to many more people than the larger global lines who largely operate out of Southampton and Dover.

The ship itself was fantastic, but did remind me that as we progress further from the days of Mid-Century liners being plentiful, each ship labeled “classic” becomes more of a stretch – few of the traditionally “classic” ships are now left. *Marco Polo* is a mashup of amazing, expansive, cascading teak decks with sheer severe enough to almost require rappelling equipment to maneuver, and a very pleasant and classic 1990s cruise ship décor that reflects the designs of many other vessels of that time. There was nothing wrong with this combination, and each part of it was quite pleasant, but it’s hard at this point to find a Mid-Century hull with a Mid-Century interior. Nonetheless, *Marco Polo* exudes a classical grace all around.

There were bits that reminded me of the past. I had a real cabin key, which required re-learning to lock the cabin when I left, and the bathroom had a proper water-flush toilet, activated by a square-foot button almost at the ceiling.

In each port, the docking reminded me somewhat of the concert of ropes and cranes that typified my voyage on *Lofoten* (also from the class of 1965) last year. As we came into the Amsterdam Cruise Terminal on a crystal-clear morning, I watched ropes thrown in practiced procedure as *Marco Polo* spun on her bow line, the bow crane simultaneously telescoping to bring the gangway down to the quayside. From the perspective of a truly massive forward observation deck under the bridge, it could well be one of the best ships for ship lovers to sail in to experience the working side of cruise travel.

Marco Polo is a true joy to sail in, even as a slightly odd juxtaposition of cruising eras – and though the Cruise and Maritime Voyages experience is not exactly the same as a trip with a larger cruise line, it was wonderfully pleasant.

Perhaps the majesty of *Marco Polo* was showcased best in the one half sea day we had after our six-hour call in Bruges. The sun shining and the wind still on the English Channel, I grabbed my bathing suit and headed to the hot tubs on the top aft deck. The sturdy funnel that had seen many a livery smoked above, while astern a cascading wedding cake of teak decks led to a shimmering wake. The modern classic *Mein Schiff 2* (ex-*Mercury*) sailed a few miles to starboard while we passed a lightship and a wind farm. The interminable waterway of the Channel was smooth as glass, the sea and sky welded together without a joint, leading into the grandeur of a glorious sunset.



Clockwise from top left: MARCO POLO at Tilbury, London; The stately funnel, with CMV livery; tiered after decks are ideal for strolling and gazing at the passing scenery; hot tubs with a view. (Greg Fitzgerald / Bob Allen)

SHIP OF THE MONTH

Ship of the month will return in the December issue of The Porthole.

OFFICERS

Chairman: Ted Scull*
 Vice Chairman: David Hume*
 Branch Secretary: Greg Fitzgerald
 Membership Secretary: Mario De Stefano
 Treasurer: Alan Borthwick

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Bob Allen
 Alan Borthwick
 Mario De Stefano
 Greg Fitzgerald
 Stuart Gewirtzman
 David Hume*
 Marjorieann Matuszek
 Carol Miles*
 Doug Newman
 Ted Scull*

COMMITTEE HEADS

Finance: Alan Borthwick
 Membership: Mario De Stefano
 Newsletter: Bob Allen
 Program: Ted Scull*
 Special Events: David Hume*
 Website: Stuart Gewirtzman

* Past Chairman