



WORLD SHIP SOCIETY – PORT OF NEW YORK BRANCH  
PRESENTS  
OUR FIRST EVER VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

Friday, June 26, 2020 – 6:00 PM

## SEARCHING FOR ADVENTURE ON SEA & LAND

By Tom Rinaldi and Ted Scull



The Port of New York Branch has been unable to provide monthly meetings since February; hence we are trying out new technology to bring presentations into your home. We understand that accessing a meeting via Zoom may be unfamiliar to some, while now quite familiar to others. Instructions for registering for the meeting will follow in a separate email or USPS mailing.

For our June program, long-time members Tom Rinaldi and Ted Scull will each present two trips that illustrate their passion for travel—with a dose of adventure—by sea, river and rail to interesting destinations around the globe. The format of the meeting will be alternating presentations with some discussion between Tom and Ted about creating unusual itineraries.

The first of Ted's two journeys will be a trip from New York to Moscow during the early years of Soviet tourism, traveling by liner, two river boats and numerous trains. We will then join Ted on his travels around East Africa by "The Lunatic Express" and other trains, and aboard a WWI-era coal-burning steamer on a partial four-day circumnavigation of Lake Victoria.

Tom Rinaldi will revisit two subjects that reflect his own evolving ideas about travel: first, a series of Mediterranean ferry crossings made while living in Italy in 2004, and second, a three-week trip across East Asia by sea and rail in the spring of 2011. This latter trip featured visits to preserved passenger ships along the way, several of which—including the Italian Line's motorship Augustus—have since vanished. Tom will discuss how these two journeys figure into a sequence of travels over a span of 15 years, and how the success of each trip set the stage for progressively more ambitious itineraries in succession.

**NEXT EVENTS:** The programs "Passage to Papua" by Tom Rinaldi and "Icon of Identity: The ILE DE FRANCE on the World Stage" by Christian Roden will be rescheduled. PONY Branch cruise: December 8, 2020 on the QUEEN MARY 2.

**ADDRESS:** PO Box 384, New York, NY 10185-0384

**E-MAIL:** [wsspony@gmail.com](mailto:wsspony@gmail.com)

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SAGA ROSE, completed in 1965 as SAGAFJORD for the Norwegian America Line, anchored at Dubrovnik, Croatia on October 26, 2007. (Bob Allen)

### **ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

Arrivals and Departures will return once both the cruise lines and governmental agencies lift the cruising ban.

### **MARITIME NEW YORK: MUSEUMS, LECTURES, WALKING TOURS AND HARBOR OUTINGS**

**Compiled by Ted Scull**

**SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM** – [www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org](http://www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org) or 212-748-8600.

**TEMPORARILY CLOSED**

Waterfront and Historic Ships: Pier 16 | Wed-Sun | 11am to 5pm (weather permitting)

Galleries and Gift Shop at Schermerhorn Row: 12 Fulton St. | Wed-Sun | 11am to 5pm

2020 Cruises aboard Schooner Pioneer and Tugboat W.O. Decker: TBA

2020 Upcoming Events: TBA

**GOVERNORS ISLAND** – <https://www.govisland.com>

**SUMMER 2020 OPENING DATE TBA**

Hours: Monday-Thursday 10 am – 6 pm; Late-night hours TBA.

Ferries: Battery Maritime Building (adjacent to the Staten Island Ferry Terminal) beginning at 10:00 am. Also, Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge Park (at the foot of Atlantic Avenue) on Saturday & Sunday only from 11:00 am. Early departures are free. Adults \$3. Children under 12 free. IDNYC cardholders free. Seniors \$1.

Be sure to select THINGS TO DO for new activities and programs added throughout the year.

**FIREBOAT JOHN J. HARVEY** – <https://www.1931fireboat.org/>

Public trips: TBA

**NYC FERRY** – <https://www.ferry.nyc/>

**MODIFIED SCHEDULE IN EFFECT ON ALL ROUTES**

The city-financed ferry system currently operates six routes: Astoria, East River, Lower East Side, Soundview in the Bronx, Rockaway, and South Brooklyn. The one-way fare is \$2.75. Bicycles are an additional \$1.00. No senior rates for regular trips. The rides make great outings. Look for suggested outings using the ferries on the web page in the future.

**THE WORKING HARBOR COMMITTEE** – [www.workingharbor.com](http://www.workingharbor.com) or 212-757-1600.

Cruises to both remote and well-travelled parts of New York Harbor including the Hudson River to view tugboat races, Gowanus Bay and Erie Basin in Brooklyn, a circumnavigation of Staten Island, and cruises to the Port Newark and Port Elizabeth container ship terminals. Scheduled trips: TBA.

### **A Selection of Other Boat Operators and Museums**

**HORNBLOWER CRUISES** – <https://hornblowernewyork.com/new-york-sightseeing-tours/>

Daily year-round, one-hour cruises from Pier 15, South Street Seaport. Daily Hop-On Hop-Off cruises from Pier 78 (Hudson River at West 38th Street), and Brookfield Place in Lower Manhattan. Select the link for the departure times and fares.

**OPERATIONS TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED**

**NEW YORK WATER TAXI** [www.nywatertaxi.com](http://www.nywatertaxi.com) or 866-989-2542.

Hop-On Hop-Off All Day Access Pass from West 42nd Street (Hudson River) to Battery Park, South Street Seaport and Brooklyn DUMBO.

**OPERATIONS TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED**

**CIRCLE LINE** [www.circleline.com](http://www.circleline.com) 212-563-3200.

Cruises around Manhattan, Harbor Lights, Music, from Pier 83 (Hudson River at West 43rd Street) and Pier 16 at the South Street Seaport.

**OPERATIONS TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED**

**NY WATERWAY** [www.nywaterway.com](http://www.nywaterway.com) or 800-533-3779.

Ferry services from West 39th Street, Battery Park City, and Pier 11/Wall Street to numerous landings on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River and to Belford in Monmouth County. Also special-event cruises.

**PAULUS HOOK-BROOKFIELD PLACE SERVICE OPERATING WEEKDAYS-ONLY ON A MODIFIED SCHEDULE — ALL OTHER ROUTES TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED**

**THE NATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM** [www.lighthousemuseum.org](http://www.lighthousemuseum.org) or 718-390-0040.

Located near the Staten Island Ferry Terminal at St. George. Self-guided tours, events on site, and Lighthouse Boat Tours. 2020 schedule of eight trips is up on the website. Here are the next two: 1) June 26 – Ambrose Channel and Buffet Dinner; 2) July 12 – East River Through Hell Gate to Long Island Sound. Others see website.

**TEMPORARILY CLOSED**

**THE NOBLE MARITIME COLLECTION** [www.noblemaritime.org](http://www.noblemaritime.org) or 718-447-6490.

Museum and ship model gallery. Events include workshops, sea shanty sessions, talks and an annual auction. 2020 partial event listing is now up on website. Location is the historic Sailors' Snug Harbor Cultural Center on Staten Island – [snug-harbor.org](http://snug-harbor.org) – a landmarked Greek Revival building complex that hosts performing arts events, visual arts, a botanical garden and a heritage farm. Public transit access: Staten Island Ferry to St. George, then S40 bus along Richmond Terrace, or S44 bus along Henderson Avenue to the inland entrance.

**TEMPORARILY CLOSED**

### **A NOTE FROM CHAIRMAN PAT DACEY**

"The whistle is blowing; the stewards are calling 'All visitors ashore'; and the sailing hour is at hand. Relax, enjoy the trip, and discover or rediscover the bracing delights of 'the only way to cross.'" – Walter Lord

The Porthole often includes a timely cruise review written by one of our intrepid traveling members. However, since the onslaught of Covid-19, the cruising world has temporarily paused. During this pause, we can reflect on the above quote, in which Walter Lord succinctly sums up the sensory phenomenon associated with an ocean voyage. It is encouraging that we can experience the thrill of an ocean voyage through print.

As a way to keep our members engaged during our shared, socially-distanced "lay up" while we plan our next voyage, we are re-publishing a first person account of a transatlantic crossing on the QUEEN ELIZABETH during her 1964 season. With the kind permission of the Steamship Historical Society of America, we are reprinting in its entirety "A CROSSING ON A QUEEN" in original format from Steamboat Bill, No. 100, Winter 1966.

This 1964 article was written by a very young William Flayhart, III, a 20-year-old setting off to Scotland to undertake a year of study at the University of Edinburgh. Flayhart would eventually become professor emeritus at Delaware State University and a distinguished scholar specializing in world and maritime history. Flayhart was also the author or co-author of six books, including "QE2" with Commodore Ronald Warwick.

The article details his crossing during the final active service years of the QUEEN ELIZABETH. The crossing took place during Hurricane Gladys, a tropical cyclone with winds that peaked at 145 mph - a Cat. 4 hurricane - before dissipating on September 24, 1964. During the storm, the QUEEN ELIZABETH was still able to maintain a speed of 27.8 knots, a remarkable achievement for the 24-year old liner.

Flayhart's experience dining in the Tourist Class Restaurant with temperatures well over 90 degrees certainly explains Cunard's decision to install central air conditioning during her last major refit, over the winter of 1965-1966. This was determined an



essential component of a modernization designed to keep the QUEEN ELIZABETH sailing into the mid-1970s. The work was completed, but air conditioning, an outdoor swimming pool and a Lido Deck did not save her from early retirement in 1968.

Please enjoy reading “A CROSSING ON A QUEEN.” It is a wonderful reminder of those exciting voyages from our past, the much anticipated voyages in our future, and a salute to Cunard Line’s 180<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, which we mark on July 4, 2020.



Company postcards show the RMS QUEEN ELIZABETH arriving in and departing from New York in the 1950's.

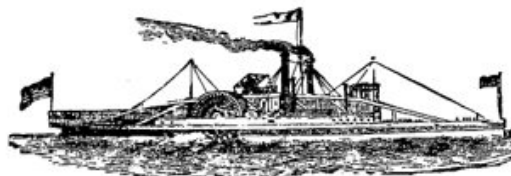
(Pat Dacey collection)

# STEAMBOAT BILL

No. 100

WINTER - 1966

Staten Island



New York

## A CROSSING ON A QUEEN

by William H. Flayhart, III

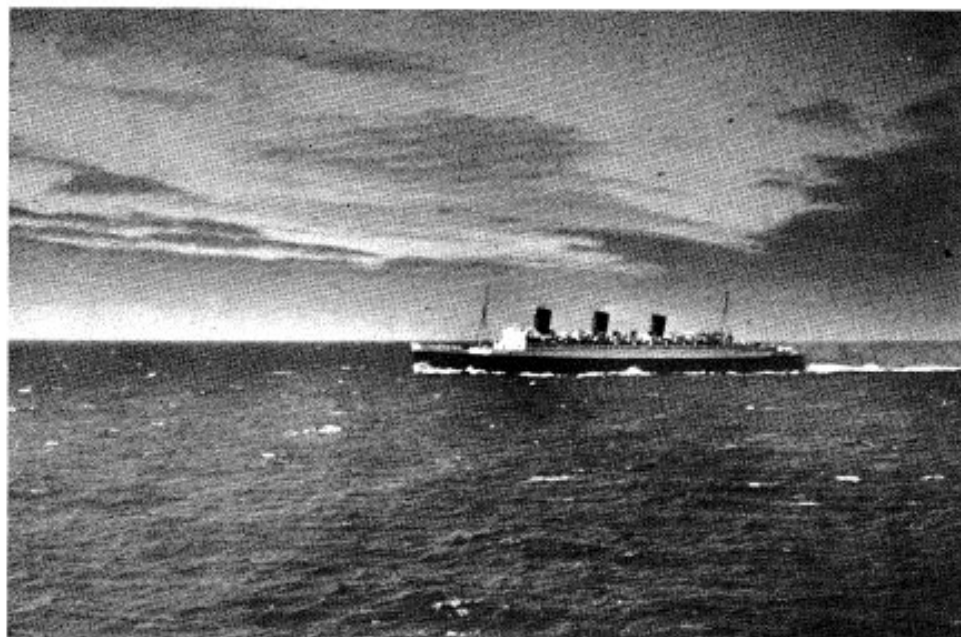
A crossing on one of the Cunard QUEENS had been a dream of mine for a long time and one which I had not expected to realize for a good many years. However, an acceptance from the University of Edinburgh to undertake a year of studies in Scotland made a trip to the United Kingdom possible, and there was no question in my mind as to how it was to be made but on a Cunard QUEEN. The Cunard Line's Publicity Department in New York had proven very helpful to me on a number of occasions and I had enjoyed a tour of the liner at her North River pier during one trip to New York. During the year's time between when I booked my passage and when I actually sailed, a deck plan of QUEEN ELIZABETH was never far from my hands. Perhaps the knowledge that I have lived the majority of my life two hundred miles inland will make somewhat more realistic the excitement that a young historian keenly interested in maritime history would feel at being able to cross the Atlantic on one of the great and almost legendary Cunard QUEENS.

When the mighty horns of QUEEN ELIZABETH blasted their parting phrase--"I am going astern"--I was the most delighted fellow on board the liner. The other passengers may have been looking forward to their stay in Europe, but "Half the fun is getting there" would really be true in my case. The Moran

tugs pushed QUEEN ELIZABETH out of her slip into the North River and pointed her bow downstream towards the Statue of Liberty, the Narrows and the open sea. New York City was in the midst of one of its early fall heat waves which made the atmospheric conditions stifling. The result of this was that when the lifeboat drill was held fifteen minutes after the noon sailing, all of the passengers could have rung out their clothes over the side of the ship by the time the drill was over.

Going below to a sumptuous Cunard lunch shortly after sailing provided many passengers with their first and last time to partake of solid food for the next thirty hours. The kitchens did not go on strike, but this was to be no ordinary crossing. The wind began to pick up soon after QUEEN ELIZABETH had dropped her pilot and steamed past the Ambrose Lightship. The sky rapidly turned leaden and by early supper (6 p.m.) the invisible Cunard Line crew had strung the passageways with some of the "most attractive looking" maroon ropes. Fewer and fewer passengers were to be seen up and about as the late dinner hour neared. Shortly before the late dinner I found it prudent to retire to my cabin to await the worst as the Cunarder began to plunge and roll. The worst just happened to be all the tricks in the bag of a full-blown tropical hurricane.





QUEEN MARY in mid-Atlantic, as photographed by the author from QUEEN ELIZABETH.  
-- Printed from a colored slide by R. L. Graham

QUEEN ELIZABETH was forced to steam through a portion of Hurricane Gladys, one of the strongest storms of the 1964 season, which lay across the North Atlantic shipping lanes.

The stabilizers of QUEEN ELIZABETH are of great benefit in combating the roll of the liner in a heavy swell but are relatively useless in a full-fledged hurricane. This the Cunard Line discovered to its, or rather its insurer's, sorrow shortly after QUEEN MARY received her stabilizers in 1958. MARY had entered some heavy weather and suffered the misfortune of having one of her stabilizer fins sheared off in mid-Atlantic. Hence, since three-million-dollar stabilizers are just too expensive to risk in heavy weather, they are accordingly "pulled in." As the weather deteriorated around QUEEN ELIZABETH, her stabilizers were "pulled in" and the result was that, thereafter, the "old girl" rolled to her heart's content. According to one reputable source, "She rolled just a little bit further and stayed there just a little bit longer than she had ever done before." Another source put one of the liner's roll "well in excess of 27°s."

Torrential rains necessitated the closing of the ventilators with the result that the temperature inside QUEEN ELIZABETH began to rise and this further added to the discomforts of the first portion of the crossing. There was no danger of frostbite! The temperature in the Tourist Class Restaurant went well over 90°f. and served to discourage any great use of the facilities at breakfast on the next morning (Thursday). During the wee

hours of the morning, I awakened after a fitful catnap absolutely parched. A pressing of the button promptly brought the night steward whom I asked if there was anything to drink in the way of a soft drink or lemonade available? A look of the deepest concern crossed his face as he explained that at that hour all the bars and other facilities would be closed. I thanked him for his trouble and he left, to return almost immediately--"I could make you a squash, sir, if you would like." By that time I would have liked anything wet and cold and I could have forgone the last qualification, so I said yes without having the faintest idea as to what I was getting. The steward rushed off and returned within five minutes with a large cold glass of "squash" which the first sip revealed to be the British version of good old American lemonade. The incident served to introduce me to the tremendous and thoughtful service of the Cunard Line staff!

It is worth noting that despite the ninety-mile per hour winds and the sixty-foot seas, QUEEN ELIZABETH maintained a speed of 27.8 knots during the night as she fought her way through Hurricane Gladys. This without doubt is a tremendous tribute to the high quality of the British shipbuilding industry and the Cunard crew. The liner's cruising speed of 27.8 knots through the storm was only .7 of a knot less than her normal rate in spite of all the extenuating circumstances.

QUEEN ELIZABETH had sailed from New York at 11:45 a.m. Wednesday, September 23, 1964, and had spent the better part of Wednesday

evening and Thursday morning in the midst of Hurricane Gladys. By 10 a.m. Thursday the winds and torrential rains had abated and I was walking along the promenade deck of QUEEN ELIZABETH when the liner bit her bow into one wave, shuddering particularly hard. To my utter amazement I looked out the windows that line the promenade deck and could see nothing in view but a mountain of green water. The might of the North Atlantic which could put a wall of green water as high as the promenade deck of the towering Cunarder was vividly brought home and I gained a new respect for the ocean when I realized that this was the largest liner in the world. That wave I came to regard as the Hurricane's parting punch since the weather and seas moderated considerably thereafter and by midnight on the second night out a few welcome stars were twinkling through the scattered clouds.

Recuperating from the previous day, I had spent Friday morning in my cabin reading the Ocean Times (the daily Cunard Line newspaper) and the attractive Calendar of the Days Events, both of which had been slipped under the cabin door at an early hour. When I had been asked on the previous day whether we would see QUEEN MARY during the crossing, I had authoritatively said no as it was the Cunard Line's policy never to have its two superliners come within fifty miles of each other on the high seas--or so I thought. Shortly after one I left my cabin on C deck for the restaurant and lunch when I noticed an announcement that "R.M.S. QUEEN MARY will be in view at approximately 1:30 p.m." It took about five seconds for the message to register and then I tore back to the cabin to grab my camera. Leaving the cabin, camera in hand, I glanced at my watch which indicated 1:29 and added greater impetus to my forward lunge for the elevator. I made it from my cabin on C deck to the sports deck in three minutes flat which must be some sort of a record for QUEEN ELIZABETH at lunch time.

Dashing out on the broad sports deck I was just in time to see a small white speck appear over the north-eastern horizon. Slowly the sparkling white superstructure of the great Cunarder broadened out and her three, massive, red funnels grew larger as QUEEN MARY steamed towards a mid-Atlantic meeting with her sister. The two Cunard QUEENS approached each other at a combined speed of nearly sixty knots, and, as she neared, QUEEN MARY slowly turned to cut across the wake of QUEEN ELIZABETH. The sky was a glorious blue, a brilliant sun was shining, and the sea was a deep navy blue, all serving to perfectly frame QUEEN MARY, the "Grand Old Lady of the Atlantic," as she slammed past QUEEN ELIZABETH. The sight of the "most majestic ship in being" knifing through the calm sea with the white spray streaming back from her bow, will remain forever one of the high points of my year abroad if not of my life. The QUEENS passed

within three miles of each other and as they did the air was rent with the deafening blasts of their two-ton horns as the great Cunarders saluted each other. The scene was one to thrill the heart of any lover of the sea and ships.

The rest of the crossing was anticlimactic as nothing could surpass the meeting of the QUEENS. The twinkling lights along the southern coast of England gave me my first contact with the "Old World" and the ancient breakwaters of Cherbourg made me feel as though I had finally made it. The channel crossing from Cherbourg to Southampton was the balmiest and pleasantest portion of the entire trip. QUEEN ELIZABETH steamed up the Southampton Water past the outward bound Italian liner AURELIA to her home berth at the Southampton Ocean Terminal. The passage time from New York to Cherbourg along the celebrated "Blue Riband" tract was four days, fourteen hours, fifteen minutes over a distance of 3,125 miles at an average speed of 28.34 knots. It had been a most memorable and worthwhile "crossing on a QUEEN."

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

William H. (Bill) Flayhart possesses a keen interest in all nautical matters but particularly enjoys studying, photographing and writing about the vessels engaged in the world's passenger liner industry. In June 1966 Bill graduated from Lycoming College, Williamsport, Penna., with a B.A. cum laude with honors in history. Last March he was named a Woodrow Wilson National Fellow -- entitling him to all expenses for one year at the graduate school of his choice -- and he elected to attend the University of Virginia where he later will hold a University Teaching Fellowship. His B.A. degree "with honors in history" was obtained on the basis of a thesis he wrote on the History of the Origins and Development of the American Line, 1873-1895, which he hopes to enlarge into a book at some future date.

Articles by him have appeared in Marine News, journal of the World Ship Society.

#### THE STEAMBOAT THAT WASN'T

by William C. Steuart

All those in the neighborhood of Baltimore harbor during the last decade of the 19th century, or the first four or five years of the present one, would probably have seen the vessel described herein. But they would be puzzled by my use of this title.

The vessel was BERTIE E. TULL, which carried freight and passengers from Baltimore to points on the Eastern Shore of Chesapeake Bay. She did not differ materially in appearance from the fifty or more steamboats plying out

This historical STEAMBOAT BILL article was reprinted in its entirety with permission from the Steamship Society of America.

www.ssha.org

## **SHIP IN PORT – OVER IN HOBOKEN ON THE NEPTUNIA**

**By Bill Miller**

Back in the 1950s, New York harbor was all but crammed with shipping companies and their ships struggling for pier space. The Greek Line, a passenger firm, was one of them. Often, its ships had to dock over in less convenient Hoboken. Even its big, almost brand new flagship OLYMPIA was sometimes assigned to a berth at the foot of Fourth Street in mile-square Hoboken. Another of its ships was the NEPTUNIA and, as a child, I recall seeing her as well, at Fourth Street and in the shadows of, say, the likes of the far bigger and grander NIEUW AMSTERDAM of Holland-America Line, which was just across the slip, but at the Fifth Street pier.

The 10,500-ton NEPTUNIA was one of the "work horses" of the busy trans-Atlantic run in the 1950's. She wasn't luxurious or even fancy, but merely designed for the low-fare tourist class trade, offering basic comfort. European immigrants were her mainstay going westbound to North America; mostly budget tourists and students filled her berths going eastward.

Constructed in 1920, the 523-ft long NEPTUNIA had her roots in the old Dutch colonial trade, between Amsterdam and the distant East Indies and routed via the Suez Canal and the steamy Indian Ocean. The exact outbound routing was quite extensive: Amsterdam, Southampton, Gibraltar or Algiers, Palma or Villefranche, Genoa, Port Said, the Suez Canal, Colombo, Sabang, Belawan Deli, Singapore and finally Batavia (now Jakarta). On a full one-way voyage, Amsterdam to Batavia took 30 days. She was then called JOHAN DE WITT and belonged to the Nederland Line. There was nothing particularly special about her. She plied a steady service and carried a rather scant 353 passengers – 197 in upper-deck first class, 120 in second class and then a mere 36 down and aft in third class. During World War II and after the Dutch invasion and occupation by the Nazis, the ship was operated by the British, managed by the Orient Line, and served the Allied cause by carrying mostly soldiers. When the War ended in 1945, she was returned to the Dutch, but was not restored. Her future employment was in question as the Dutch East Indies then became independent and turned into Indonesia. She was for sale and, in 1948, the Greek Line (under an affiliate name: Compania Maritima Del Este and using the Panamanian flag) bought her. Greek ship owners typically liked old and therefore less expensive passenger ships that they could modify, to expand their capacities and hopefully squeeze out a few more years. Somewhere, making a profit, even a large profit, was in the equation. The NEPTUNIA's Greek Line fleet mates were then much like a gathering of elderly relatives – there was the CANBERRA, dating from 1913; the COLUMBIA, also 1913; and the NEA HELLAS, comparatively newer but from 1922.



The NEPTUNIA approaching the Hoboken docks in this view from 1951.

(Bill Miller Collection)

Altogether, the NEPTUNIA would sail for a very respectable 37 years. The Greek Line had refitted the ship with enlarged quarters to carry up to 786 passengers – 38 in a very small first class and 748 in tourist class, mostly in large cabins. The ship also got a new, more modern look in which the second funnel and the aft mast were removed.

At first, between 1949 and 1951, the 15-knot ship was used on the Mediterranean run, sailing between Piraeus, Genoa, other varied ports, Halifax and New York. Then, especially to profit from the post-war German migrant trade, she moved onto the North Atlantic – between Bremerhaven, Southampton, Cherbourg, Cobh and New York. Again, a westbound call was usually included at Halifax, especially to land European immigrants unable to enter the United States. But on the return, her schedule featured a call at Boston on the day after leaving New York. New York to Bremerhaven usually took 13 days and was priced (in 1951) from \$240 in first class and \$150 in tourist. Her final run, between 1955-57, was to Canada – between Bremerhaven and Montreal. Although rather unsuited to cruising and hardly equal to a modern-day cruise ship, the NEPTUNIA was occasionally sent on wintertime cruises to the Caribbean from New York. She had no amenities such as air-conditioning, an outdoor pool or cabins with private bathroom facilities.



How much longer this aging ship would have endured remains a question. But in fog during a crossing, on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1957, she struck Daunts Rock near Cobh and was badly damaged. Taking on water, she had to be beached, but was found to be too old for costly repairs. In March of the following year and after being patched, the NEPTUNIA was towed to her old homeland and scrapped at Rotterdam.

## SHIP NEWS

By Bob Allen

**CRUISING SLOWLY RESUMES:** Smaller cruise operators are slowly returning vessels to limited service. German river cruise line Nicko Cruises became the first company to offer voyages in the Covid-19 era. The NickoVISION departed on a Rhine River cruise on June 1, carrying 40 passengers; she can accommodate 200. Passengers were screened for temperature and virus antibodies before boarding, and social distancing guidelines were in place, including mask wearing in certain areas and one-way lanes in narrow passageways. The buffet, spa, gym and pool were all closed. Nicko Cruises is offering only German River cruises, and has cancelled voyages in other parts of Europe and Asia. Future cruises will be capped at 70% of passenger capacity. Hurtigruten's 919-passenger FINNMARKEN resumed limited service on the coastal passenger/mail run when she departed Bergen on June 16 with 200 passengers. Social distancing was also applied, and passenger lists were capped at 50% of capacity. Norway is currently only open to visitors from Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Gotland, a Swedish island. Other travelers to Norway need to remain in quarantine for at least 10 days after arrival. SeaDream Cruises, which normally sails and sources passengers worldwide, will begin service within Norway on June 20. Paul Gauguin Cruises, owned by French operator Ponant, is scheduling cruises from Tahiti when French Polynesia reopens for tourism on July 15, while the Ponant brand plans to begin cruising within French waters in July. The company has worked to develop an elaborate social distancing and disinfection protocol with IHU Mediterranee-Infection of Marseille, France, experts in infectious disease control. Ponant will limit occupancy to 50% of vessel capacity. Within the United States, American Queen Steamboat Company plans to resume river cruise service on July 20. The news is not as good mid-size and larger cruise lines: on June 19, Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) announced a voluntary suspension for all USA-based cruises on ships carrying more than 250 passengers. Some lines have pushed start-up dates as far back as November, while others still seek emergency financial resources necessary for viability.

**CARNIVAL TRIMS FLEET, BUT NO COSTA SAVINGS:** As a result of the pandemic, Carnival Corporation, the world's largest cruise operator, has announced that it will retire at least six ships by October 1. Although the list has not been made public, one of the vessels is likely the COSTA VICTORIA, which was sold in mid-June to the San Giorgio del Porto Group, a Genoa, Italy-based company that controls shipyards and ship-scrapping facilities. Completed in 1996, COSTA VICTORIA was one of the oldest ships in the Carnival Corporation fleet, so her sale in this environment is not surprising. She was a unique vessel in the fleet, distinguished as the last ship designed by Costa Cruises before it was acquired by Carnival. All subsequent Costa ships were based on a standard, interchangeable Carnival Corporation platform. The 75,166-ton, 2,394-passenger COSTA VICTORIA was planned as the first of two sister-ships. Her twin, to be named COSTA OLYMPIA, was sold before completion to Norwegian Cruise Line, which significantly altered her design for fleet consistency. She was completed in 1999 as NORWEGIAN SKY, and remains in the NCL fleet. The other Carnival Corporation vessel with Costa pedigree is the 1993-built COSTA ROMANTICA, which may also be on the disposal list due to her age. However, she was drastically redesigned and enlarged by Carnival in 2012 (at San Giorgio del Porto), and lost much of her original design in the process. ROMANTICA's sister, the 1991-built COSTA CLASSICA survives in largely original condition due to luck. She was to have been cut in half and enlarged by Carnival in 2001. The new mid-section was already complete when the shipyard, Cammell Laird, suffered severe financial distress and Carnival cancelled the rebuilding contract. The new section was eventually scrapped, and the CLASSICA remained unaltered. Carnival sold the CLASSICA to Bahamas Paradise Cruise Line in 2018, which operates 2-night cruises from Palm Beach, FL to the Bahamas. She was renamed GRAND CLASSICA, and became the running mate to another ex-Carnival Corporation ship, the GRAND CELEBRATION (ex-CARNIVAL CELEBRATION). Ironically, these short cruises may restart before the Costa fleet returns to service, and Costa's Italian design aesthetic will grace the high seas for years to come.



With the likely demise of COSTA VICTORIA, Bahamas Paradise Cruise Line's GRAND CLASSICA will be the last link to Costa Cruises' stunning design aesthetic. She is seen here at the Port of Palm Beach on May 3, 2018 (above, left). CLASSICA's main bar (above, right) is typical of her largely unaltered design. The clean lines and dramatic volumes of her interiors are a link to great Italian mid-century liner design, and make her unique in the world's cruise fleet.

(Bob Allen)

## **2020 PONY BRANCH MEMBER CRUISE – QUEEN MARY 2 TRANSATLANTIC CROSSING:**

Join fellow PONY branch members on a festive Transatlantic crossing on the QUEEN MARY 2. Details are provided in the flyer included in the January issue of The Porthole. Contact Brad Hatry at Travel Edge for additional information and reservations: [brad.hatry@traveledge.com](mailto:brad.hatry@traveledge.com) or 212-399-6223.



# TRAVEL EDGE

## **World Ship Society - Port of New York Branch & Steamship Historical Society of America**

*- present -*

**December 8, 2020**  
**7-night Eastbound Transatlantic Crossing**  
**New York to Southampton aboard**

# QUEEN MARY 2



Sail together on Cunard Line's Queen Mary 2, a remarkable flagship whose style and elegance are legendary.



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or e-mail: [brad.hatry@traveledge.com](mailto:brad.hatry@traveledge.com)**

### **OFFICERS**

Chairman: Pat Dacey  
Vice Chairman: Bob Allen  
Branch Secretary: Doug Newman  
Membership Secretary: Stuart Gewirtzman  
Treasurer: Marjorieann Matuszek\*

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Bob Allen  
Pat Dacey  
Mario De Stefano  
Doug Newman  
Stuart Gewirtzman

David Hume\*  
Marjorieann Matuszek\*  
Carol Miles\*  
Ted Scull\*  
Richard Wagner

### **COMMITTEE HEADS**

Finance:  
Membership:  
Newsletter:  
Special Events:  
Website:

Marjorieann Matuszek\*  
Stuart Gewirtzman  
Bob Allen  
Pat Dacey  
Stuart Gewirtzman/Ted Scull

• Past Chairman