

Friday, September 25, 2020 – **VIA ZOOM at 6:00 PM**

## ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISE LINE: 50 YEARS OF INNOVATION

By Allan Jordan



Clockwise from top left: Royal Caribbean's remarkable 50-year history began with the launching of SONG OF NORWAY in 1969; the stretched NORDIC PRICE docked at St. Thomas in the late 1970's; three OASIS-Class ships in formation at sea in the 2010's; the brand new SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS enters San Juan in January, 1988. (Royal Caribbean Cruise Line)

In November, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, one of the most iconic names in the cruise industry, will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inaugural voyage of SONG OF NORWAY. At roughly 18,400 gross tons and 552 feet, this ship would now be considered diminutive compared to the Freedom-Class, Oasis-Class and Quantum-Class successors in the Royal Caribbean fleet. With an eye-catching lounge cantilevered from its funnel, Royal Caribbean's first ship was a harbinger of innovations to come in both design and passenger amenities.

Throughout its first fifty years, Royal Caribbean has built some of the largest passenger ships afloat. It has introduced rock walls, aqua theaters, boxing rings, bungee trampolines, surfing simulators, skating rinks, and zip lines into the cruise experience. Not into rock-climbing or skydiving? How about an observatory platform rising more than 300 feet above the sea? Conceived by an entrepreneur who envisioned a new style of passenger experience at sea, Royal Caribbean has continued to push the design envelope with large atriums, multi-deck interior promenades and neighborhoods.

Join us, as cruise historian and maritime journalist Allan Jordan describes the evolution of Royal Caribbean's cruise ships from SONG OF NORWAY to its first mega ship, SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS, and finally to today's largest cruise ship SYMPHONY OF THE SEAS. He will entertain us along the way with stories about the company and its history.

**NEXT EVENTS:** October 30<sup>th</sup>: "Icon of Identity: The ILE DE FRANCE on the World Stage" by Christian Roden

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ROYAL VIKING STAR docking in New York, September 1989.

(Bob Allen)

### ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

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

### PREVIEW, October 30, 2020: "ICON OF IDENTITY: THE ILE DE FRANCE ON THE WORLD STAGE"

**By Christian Roden**

**VIA ZOOM – 6:00 PM**

Christian Roden will present a fascinating program on the design, history and cultural significance of the French Line's legendary ILE DE FRANCE of 1927. He will share little known stories of the ILE DE FRANCE, which he researched at the Association French Line archives.



A 1920's rendering of the ILE DE FRANCE (above, left); the first Class Entrance Foyer (above, right)



(CGT/Christian Roden Collection)





ILE DE FRANCE First Class Deck Plan cover (above, left); the First Class Dining Salon (above, center); post-war brochure cover (above, right).  
(CGT/Christian Roden Collection/Bob Allen Collection)

## **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>

**OPENED JULY 15, 2020 WITH NEW TICKET RESERVATION SYSTEM**

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

Ferries: Battery Maritime Building (adjacent to the Staten Island Ferry Terminal) with service every 30 minutes. **Brooklyn ferries will run from the Red Hook/Atlantic Basin ferry terminal. There will be no Brooklyn ferries from Pier 6 at Brooklyn Bridge Park in 2020.** Early departures are free. Adults \$3. No fare for children under 12, seniors age 65 and older, IDNYC card holders, current and former military service members, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents, and Governors Island members. NYC Ferry service will offer additional connections to Governors Island with a dedicated weekend shuttle from Wall Street/Pier 11 that will operate approximately every 30 minutes beginning July 18. Fare \$2.75 with free transfer from connecting NYC Ferry routes.

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

Public trips: TBA

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

**SUMMER SCHEDULE IN EFFECT**

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.

**SIGHTSEEING EXCURSIONS AND IKEA EXPRESS FERRY 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.

**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.

**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**

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

With the continued uncertainty regarding the future of large gatherings and public safety considerations due to Covid-19, the WSS-PONY Branch will continue to host virtual meetings via Zoom for the foreseeable future. Moving forward, it is our goal to continue with our informative monthly membership meetings, provide you with a quality and up-to-date website and continued publication of our comprehensive newsletter, The Porthole. We will strive to continue to keep all of our members informed of our future plans and upcoming events through our social media accounts as well as our traditional methods of communication.

If you have any questions about our upcoming programs or have any comments and/or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [wsspony@gmail.com](mailto:wsspony@gmail.com).

### **ELECTION SEASON IS HERE**

It's time for the election of officers for The World Ship Society - Port of New York Branch. Please submit your nominations for Chairman, Vice Chairman, Branch Secretary, Membership Secretary and Treasurer. Send your nominations to World Ship Society, PO Box 384, New York, NY 101085-0384, Attention: Nominations. All nominations must be received by October 30, 2020.

### **SHIP'S LOG, JUNE 2020 – "FINDING ADVENTURE ON SEA AND LAND"**

**By Pat Dacey**

On Friday, June 26, 2020, the Port of New York branch presented its membership meeting via Zoom digital technology due to the inability to hold an in-person meeting because of Covid 19. This was the first time that the branch used the internet to host a meeting and we are happy to report that both the presenters and members were up to the task of learning the "ropes" of a digital presentation. With over 80 members and friends logged in for the event, we were able to greatly expand our "meeting room" all the way to Ohio for some of our long-distance members.

The meeting titled "Searching for Adventure on Sea and Land" was presented by long-time members Ted Scull and Tom Rinaldi and consisted of each of them presenting a trip or two that demonstrated their individual passion for travel, with a dose of adventure by sea, river and rail. The format of the meeting was a conversation between friends, with Ted and Tom sharing their experiences, style of travel and interests spontaneously along with a photographic diary of their journeys. It was obvious from the start of the presentation that in addition to both Ted and Tom starting out on their respective adventures while they were in their twenties, that these two friends share the same focus in travel and adventure.

The presentation began with Ted sharing his adventures around East Africa in 1962 through his firsthand account, accompanied by his original combination of Ektachrome and Kodachrome slides. Yearning to see the world in an interesting way, Ted set off to experience life in a "bush" hospital in Tanganyika run by the Universities' Missions of Central Africa, a missionary society established by members of the Anglican Church within the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and Dublin. Along with the 100-bed maternity hospital, the mission also ran a church as well as girls' boarding school.

When Ted arrived, via an East African Airways DC3 and an East African Railways and Harbours train, Tanganyika was only in its seventh month of independence from the United Kingdom. While living in the Bishop of East Africa's hut for two months, Ted worked not only in the hospital but also taught time at the middle high school, helped on a four-year project of building a stone church, and even gave driving lessons. His work extended to accompanying the doctor of the hospital, Ursula, as she traveled by car on dirt roads to treat her patients in an area the approximate size of Connecticut. (Ted's experience in East Africa led to a 55-year friendship with Ursula that lasted until her death three years ago.)

After his time in Tanganyika, Ted reluctantly left the mission and went to Mombasa, a major port for ships coming into East Africa, where he described in some detail the many maritime happenings and showed slides of ships such as Lloyd Triestino's AFRICA, British India's KARANJA and Messageries Maritime LA BOURDONNAIS.

Continuing his adventure, Ted provided history and the operational structure of the East African Railway, including details on their unique “rolling stock” before recounting his travel on the railway’s “One-Up” train to Nairobi, continuing on the “Lunatic Express” to Kampala. While at Kampala, Ted set out to see some of the locations used in the 1951 film, “The African Queen,” including Murchison Falls National Park where waters of the Nile flow through a narrow gauge 23 feet wide before plummeting 141 feet.

After a flight aboard a pre-WWII DH-89 biplane from Entebbe to Bukoba on Lake Victoria, Ted boarded the WWI-era coal-burning steamer USOGA of the East African Railways and Harbours Corporation on a partial four-day circumnavigation of Lake Victoria. The SS USOGA, built in 1913, was considered a “knock down” vessel as it was constructed in Scotland, disassembled, the parts carried by ship to Mombasa and by rail to be reassembled on Lake Victoria. Her initial voyage was as an armed merchant vessel steaming across the lake to bombard the German fort at Bukoba. The Germans would eventually withdraw from German East Africa and the colony renamed Tanganyika: an UN Mandated Territory looked after by the British.

The USOGA carried three class of passengers – first, second and deck - and lots of cargo in the two forward holds: bananas, cement, building materials, a carefully guarded shipment of recently-mined gold, a Land Rover, etc. She sailed overnight between the ports and spent the day handling the freight.

With one final overnight train journey to Nairobi and a flight home, Ted ended his captivating adventures.

Tom opened his presentation with some background on how he became a ship enthusiast while growing up in New York in the 1990’s and watching the last of the liners as they sailed into history. In 1997 he was fortunate to sail on ROTTERDAM (V) on her last transatlantic crossing from Civitavecchia to New York before she ended her career with Holland American Line later that year.

A trip that Tom took to Italy in 2004 reinvigorated his interest in ships, an interest that continues to this day. During a summer in Rome, Tom decided to take a ferry from Rome to Barcelona, sailing on the EUROSTAR ROMA. Although it was only a short trip, Tom emphasized that it was that trip that “opened the door” to traveling by ship -- and not just any ship, as Tom’s interest became focused on the older and more distinct second-hand tonnage that was still in service at the time.

Now once again “hooked,” Tom continued his journey by train to Bari, Italy where it was his intention to visit Dubrovnik and sail up the Dalmatian Coast. While recounting his sailing on the AZZURA, an early 1960’s car ferry, Tom took the opportunity to discuss the evolution of the car ferries in both design and capacity. Continuing up the coast to Split, Tom returned to Ancona, Italy on a daylight crossing aboard a ship of the same name, the 1966-built ANCONA, an elegant little ship. Both Tom and Ted reminisced about the ship and one of her sisters, PATRICIA, which Ted sailed on.

Now back in Italy, Tom journeyed to Naples from Rome where he would board the EMILIA of the Tirrenia Line for an overnight voyage to Sardinia. Tom provided an historical dialogue on the history of Tirrenia Line which was the last remaining line resulting from the consolidation of Italian shipping lines before World War II. With one more overnight crossing from Sardinia to Civitavecchia aboard the SARDINIA NOVA, the journey ended as it began (almost) with a morning arrival view of the “new” ROTTERDAM (VI) docked where Tom had previously sailed from on ROTTERDAM (V) in 1997.

Tom’s presentation continued with another journey, this one a trip to East Asia in 2011. As a result of his graduate studies in historic preservation and his focus on the adaptive re-use of the S.S. UNITED STATES, Tom received funding from Columbia University to visit East Asia to document five historical merchant ships that have been re-adapted for use in static roles. Tom envisioned many long-haul overnight ferry crossings, but planning his trip suddenly became complicated on March 11, 2011, when an earthquake and subsequent tsunami hit Japan, resulting in a meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant. Delaying his trip for two weeks, Tom was able to depart and fly into Tokyo which was only beginning on the road to recovery.

Flying into Manila, Tom sought out his first ship, the former Italian Line’s AUGUSTUS, now renamed PHILIPPINES and serving as a static floating restaurant and former hotel while still retaining many of her original fixtures. Tom had hoped for a return visit but unfortunately, she was scrapped in January of 2012. While still trying to experience the long-haul ferry service, Tom took passage on the SUPERFERRY 5 for a 24-hour trip back to Manila. Joining the ship for the short passage, Tom stated that it was one of the “most convivial and memorable” voyages that he ever took.

Flying to China, Tom was able to view the MINGHUA, now a static attraction in an entertainment district in Liuwang Bay at Shekou, China. The former ANCERVILLE, built in 1961 and owned by Compagnie de Navigation Paquet, sailed for many years for both France and China before entering her new life as a static attraction.

After a train trip to Zhanjiang, China, Tom spent time on the BRAZIL MARU, then an abandoned tourist attraction. The BRAZIL MARU was a passenger liner built in 1954 and served the Japan to Brazil emigration routes until she was retired in 1972 and sold to China.

Leaving Zhanjiang, Tom embarked on a 36-hour train trip through China to Shanghai before taking a 55-hour ferry service to Osaka, Japan. In Japan, the first ship visited was the YOTAI MARU, a former Japanese ferry that was used as an attraction at the Tokyo Maritime Museum before being scrapped in 2012.

The final ship that Tom visited was the 1930-built HIKAWA MARU and now a fully restored (compliments of NYK Lines) museum ship at the Tokyo Maritime Museum. The ship is the last surviving pre-war Japanese merchant ship in existence and along with its historic interest, the art deco interior design elements are well worth the visit.

Although the presentation was titled “Searching for Adventure on Sea and Land,” after hearing the presentation, I feel that both Ted and Tom had found what they were looking for. The evening was a success and we have received numerous positive responses to the presentations. In addition to Ted and Tom, I would like to thank our board member Doug Newman who coordinated this digital presentation and served in the capacity as production manager and director for the presentation.





Top: Tom Rinaldi's "adventure" included a visit to the 1951-built AUGUSTUS (renamed M/S PHILIPPINES), docked in Manila, Philippines; she has been scrapped since his 2012 trip. Bottom left: The polished wood bar and backlit Murano glass inlay is an example of the dramatic Italian interior design that defined the AUGUSTUS. Bottom, right: The stunning, well-preserved 1930 Art Deco interiors of the HIKAWA MARU were a highlight of the tour. Fortunately, this superb floating museum, docked in Yokohama, Japan is still intact. (Tom Rinaldi)



## **INTRODUCTION TO THE STEAMBOAT BILL ARTICLE "INNOCENT ABROAD"**

**By Pat Dacey**

As the cruising world remains on pause, we are continuing to include a past cruise review for your reading enjoyment. As a tribute to our PONY Branch cruise to Bermuda last year, we once again set sail for that wonderful little island approximately 643 miles east-southeast of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. This time, instead of sailing with Oceania Cruises on their beautiful INSIGNIA, we will travel with Miss Jean Hess as she gleefully sets sail on the QUEEN OF BERMUDA in November of 1966.

With the kind permission of the Steamship Historical Society of America we are reprinting in its entirety "INNOCENT ABROAD" in its original format from Steamboat Bill, No. 108, Winter 1968.

The article was written about the November 5, 1966 Bermuda cruise, only 14 days shy of her last voyage from New York to Bermuda. After completing over 1,200 round trip voyages to Bermuda, QUEEN OF BERMUDA's service was terminated due to economic conditions of the time and increased competition from air travel. It also marked the end of Furness Bermuda Line's 47-year relationship with Bermuda, having provided weekly service to the island from New York since December 11, 1919. On November 19, 1966, the QUEEN OF BERMUDA gently slipped from her New York moorings for one final sentimental sailing to Bermuda.

The article is a vivid, often amusing account of 1960's cruise travel recalling some of the formalities and traditions that have unfortunately laxed in later years. The voyage begins with of all things, a ship visit (remember those?) by the Steamship Historical Society of America as a "farewell memento" of the ship. Later our writer recounts her day-to-day activities with tremendous authenticity and detail to even include her menu selections such as "assorted vegetables arranged in geometrical designs." Throughout the article, we meet her shipboard friends and then tag along with her on her shore excursions and adventures around the ship

So "Bon Voyage" and please enjoy "Innocent Abroad" as a reminder of those exciting voyages from our past, and a harbinger of the much anticipated voyages in our futures.



QUEEN OF BERMUDA's final New York departure, November 19, 1966.

(Victor Scrivens/Steamship Historical Society of America)

## Innocent Abroad

By Jean Hess

One of the high points of my life was a voyage to Bermuda made aboard QUEEN OF BERMUDA in November, 1966. I first noted this handsome vessel in 1949 during my graduate school days in New York. When I learned that she would abandon the Bermuda trade in the latter part of 1966, I determined to make good on a promise to myself to have a trip on this long-admired ship.

On a mild, sunny day (November 5, 1966), finally freed of the burden of my luggage checked with the baggagemaster, I scurried down the acreage of New York's Pier 88, seeking to join the Steamship Society group having a tour of her as a farewell memento. I was already late by 15 minutes, because the New York Central train from Cleveland had dragged its wheels all night, and arrival at Grand Central was 3 hours in arrears.

A British sailor aboard QUEEN OF BERMUDA greeted me as I went up the gangway and told him I was looking for the SSHSA. Ahead I could see a sprinkling of folks with cameras, taking pictures of the ship's interiors. A page took me to my stateroom via a slow descent by lift. I left wraps, packages there-then rushed out to look for the gang. I was conversing with a SSHSAer and heard an announcement over a PA speaker to the effect that the occupant of the room I had just been assigned to, should report somewhere. I ignored the summons.

Shortly after the call, a dark-haired stranger appeared. He asked if I was Miss Hess. I was, I admitted. "Didn't you hear us call you?" I allowed I had, but hadn't bothered to respond. "Let me see your ticket", said the dark stranger. "Who are YOU", said I - "Are you assigned to my room also"-(mistakes do happen)? "No", he said. I continued the question and answer period: "Are you the Passenger Agent?" "Yes", said he. "In that case, I'll show you my ticket", and he laboriously pointed out that I had gone to the wrong room. I pointed out that I had been mislead, but would gladly change.

By this time the Chief Engineer had gotten into the act too, wagging an accusing finger at me, making various admonishments and shaking his head. I thought it was terribly funny. The English did not! I assured the officials that I had no intentions of suing. Instead of 346 on Deck C, it was B-46 on B Deck, an outside room on the port side. After dropping my packages once more, I tipped the page again, and hurried off to join SSHS.

Briefly chatting with members and taking pictures of them at the wheelhouse, took up the remaining time, and then some officers shooed us away from the wheelhouse. The James Wilsons and their group came with me to my quarters, where we all had a little toast to "Bon Voyage" and all that. The shouts and clangor of departure time progressed, complete with stereophonic sound. The Wilsons left at 2 p.m. and I went to the gangway to shake hands, appearing very trim and sober, and impressing the crew that I was really a blameless American lady on a sedate voyage.

The first of the "Today's Activities" had already been whisked under my door, and after consulting it, I felt more like a freshman during orientation week at college than I did sea voyager. There were many do's, and some don'ts. I hurried to unpack, so as to be ready for the departure and picture-taking. I began to worry over the 5:30 life-preserver drill, determined not to goof up on this. Two Moran tugs, ESTHER for the stern, and MOIRA for the bow, hovered, waiting. The ship's orchestra was out on deck A, positioned against a bulkhead, playing "Hello Dolly". I hurried up to the bow, seeing a mast come unfolded like a Japanese umbrella, and clicking pictures with my camera.

I suppressed an urgent desire to jump up and down on deck yelling "Zowie", "Eeow, I made it", as we began to move down past the United States pier, American Isbrandtsen lines, passing an old friend, ALEXANDER HAMILTON of the Circle Line. By the time we reached the Statue of Liberty, I was shivering with the bitter cold, and glad to get inside in search of a pot of English tea and some kind of sweet things to nibble. I had these in the Elysium Room. At first the little pages were avoiding me, but I finally conned one into bringing food.

I decided to temporarily skip signing up for a table, thinking a life preserver drill was going to require my undivided attention, and realizing that my room was probably a long way from the appointed station for my particular room. What with a 22,552 ton vessel to traverse, with its 587 foot length and 77 ft. breadth, I knew I had to allow sufficient time. And I was always carrying my deck plan with me the first two days - my sense of direction deserted me and instead of going to the Homer Library, I would wind up in the Elysium room. I was accustomed to the simplicity of a sound-type vessel such as those the Old Bay Line had operated, or the DELTA QUEEN, or the old-time great lakes vessels such as the D&C Line - this labyrinth of promenades and endless columns of sleeping quarters was something new for me.

As I came out of my room, billowing forth in my balloon orange life preserver, my room steward was awaiting me, to see that I and the others assigned to his section were following instructions.



It was then about 5:15. I hurried up to the Corona Room, to await further instructions -- "To The Boats", or whatever. As I wandered somewhat uncertainly into the big formal salon, a distinguished-looking chap hailed me from a table where he had been having a bracer and salted nuts prior to the boat drill. Our ensuing conversation revealed that he was a descendent - great great grandson of one old curmudgeon named Commodore Vanderbilt. (We had talked of transportation subjects, and he told of the Commodore's beginnings as a steamboat operator, then the switch to rail-way trains.)

The drill began, with a uniformed officer leading the discussion group - rather, presiding over the class - it was a long lecture. He described certain signals, admonishing us that they did not mean to abandon ship. I had no notion of abandoning ship, unless an enemy torpedo made a hasty exodus necessary! The ocean looked much too gray and big and sloppy! Mr. What's His Name, he of the Vanderbilt hierarchy, murmured that on Italian and French vessels, such drills were negligible, merely a cursory going-over. On English vessels, long-drawn-out, but on American ships, FOREVER!

Finally, when I could go below, I lay down on the comfortable bunk before dressing for dinner. Nothing formal for the first night, and only the last and one other night would require formal dress.

I had belatedly registered with the table steward for a seating, Table 81- beforehand, upon inquiring as to how and where, being upbraided, as was usual, I had found, for my lateness in doing so. (I had been out taking pictures when the original registration had occurred.)

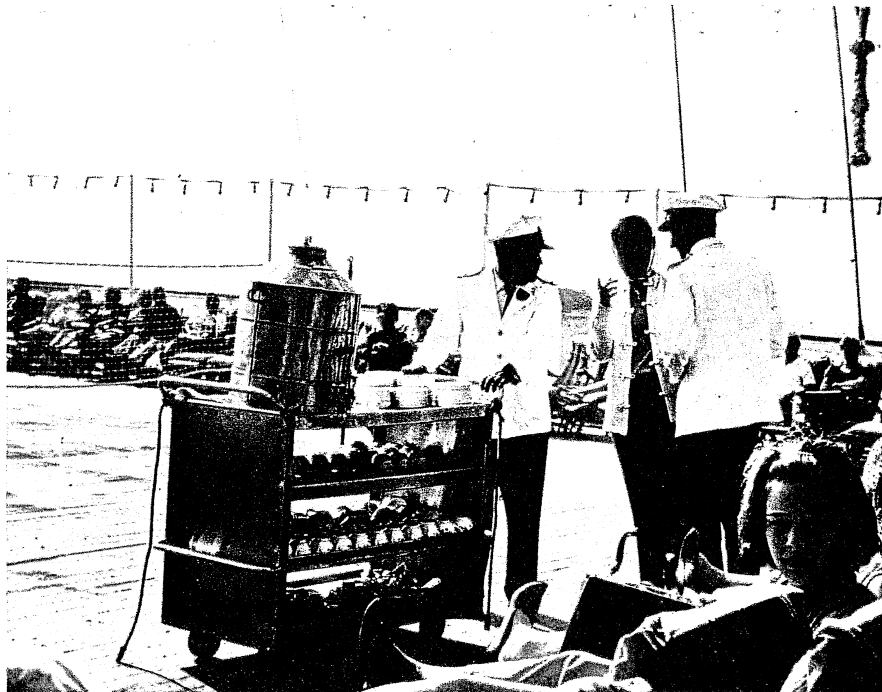
Our steward, Mr. Austin, was awaiting the six of us at his table. There were handsome menus, representing a ship's gala, imprinted, and a huge and glamorous range of gourmet treats. Enormous salt and pepper shakers and a sugar shaker, stood with water glasses partially filled, among the crested table china, all on snowy linen with starched napkins folded and standing at attention. My choice for dinner was:

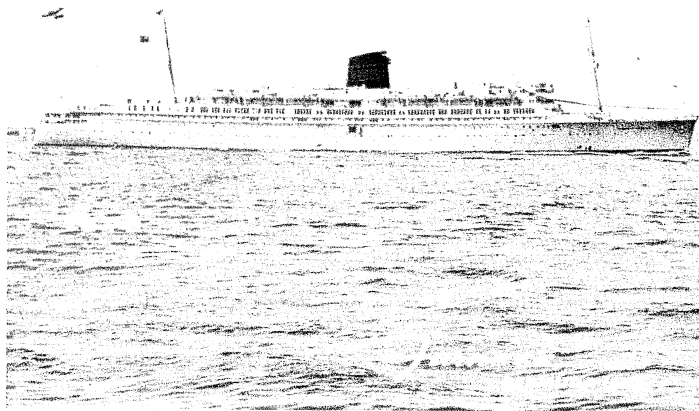
Cape Cod Oysters on Half Shell  
Hot Consomme  
A Green Salad with Roquefort Cheese Dressing  
Hot Roast Beef (rare, tender!)  
Strawberries Romanoff  
Coffee

With the above banquet were Yorkshire Pudding, a variety of vegetables, hard rolls and butter. The oysters and roast beef were superb, as was the strawberry dessert. One of the men at the table generously shared his bottle of imported champagne, and it was brought out iced, by the nattily uniformed Wine Steward, in a uniform laced over the chest by gold chains. This was real British pomp and circumstance.

The next day I caught up with long-lost sleep, but made all meals. The choices continued fantastic and abundant. I had fish for breakfast - Weakfish, broiled, with toast, coffee, grapejuice.

A 4:30 lecture clued everybody in on what to do in Bermuda, as well as what NOT to do. We were again advised by announcement from the Purser's office to "Awdvawnce" our clocks by a half hour, prior to arrival in Bermuda next day, a Monday. This made the time in Hamilton, Bermuda, like Daylight Savings Time in the East during spring, summer and early autumn.





## FAREWELL DINNER

At Sea on Board

R.M.S. "QUEEN of BERMUDA"

Captain M. E. MUSSON

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3rd, 1966

Clocks will be retarded 30 minutes during the night

## M E N U

<i>Iced Blended Juice</i>	
<i>Cherrystone Clams on the Half Shell</i>	
<i>Florida Fruit Cup</i>	<i>Croute Strasbourgoise</i>
<i>Smoked Salmon with Capers</i>	<i>Casaba Melon, Fresh Lime</i>
<i>Œufs Moscovite</i>	
<i>Clear Turtle Soup with Sherry</i>	<i>Cream of Tomato</i>
<i>(Cold) Vichyssoise</i>	
<i>Poached Filet of Sole, Marguery</i>	
<i>Broiled Fresh Bermuda Rockfish, Colbert</i>	
<i>Pétite Bouchees Regence</i>	
<i>Prime Filet Mignon Sauté, Chasseur</i>	
<i>Pineapple Sorbet</i>	
<i>Kentucky Fried Chicken with Corn Cakes &amp; Pineapple Fritters</i>	
<i>Roast Stuffed Loin of Lamb, Bouquetiere</i>	
<i>Jersey Carrots, Glacé</i>	<i>Asparagus Spears, Drawn Butter</i>
<i>Boiled New. Allumette &amp; Chateau Potatoes</i>	
<i>Cæsar Salad</i>	
<i>Rum Alaska</i>	<i>Strawberry Layer Cake</i>
<i>Petits Fours</i>	
<i>Savoury: Welsh Rarebit</i>	
<i>Stilton Cheese</i>	
<i>Coffee</i>	



Formal type dress being suggested for this Sunday evening, I wore a new black crepe cocktail dress, sleeveless, with the flowing lines and draped front so popular then, black faille sandals, matching purse, and set off with three strands of culture pearls and imitation pearl earrings. Dinner choices I made were:

Norwegian Shrimp  
Hot Consomme  
Roast Turkey & Stuffing  
Roast Potato  
Fresh Asparagus  
Peas  
Peach Melba-Coffee

And another contribution, from our generous host of the night before - a fine Sparkling Burgundy, again delivered with a flourish by the Wine Steward.

Immediately following dinner, I went up to the Homer Room to make my entries in a little diary I had elected to keep. Up forward, this pleasant room with its trim of gold and black and urns, complete with a picture of the Queen and a fireplace and bookshelves, served as library and writing room. The silence was crashing, but to my weary ears, soothing and delightful. Occasionally there was a slight creak from the forward end of the ship. Once an elderly man snored.

The names of the salons amused and fascinated me. The Elysium Room where we enjoyed entertainment such as the Sunday evening program, music and games, dancing - the tea dance music, suggesting by its name, Elysian Fields, with Orpheus chasing after Euridyce. Saturday night I had gone to see the Silver Lagoon, the ship's swimming pool. Not yet filled, the pool sported a large sign which read "POOL EMPTY". Another evidence of English attention to detail. Nubian Room was a small cocktail lounge on D-Deck, just off the Grand Saloon, the big and only dining room. The Grand Saloon had bulkheads embellished with forms of maidens. The Silver Lagoon had more graceful maidens lolling about, amid silver fixtures, and benches for resting or watching.

Saturday night's midnight buffet had been unbelievable: Cold cuts, including the most delicious tongue of beef, salads, ravioli, meringues and other pastries, coffee, tea, cheeses. But I had to skip Sunday evening's repast - no more room in my fuel bunkers. Besides, I thought I ought to do my "homework", by reading up the beautifully illustrated literature provided by Furness. I finally concluded that the things I wanted most to do were to walk, then take a bicycle trip, and a ride in a glass-bottom boat out to see the underwater sea gardens.

Somehow I had missed the announcement about breakfast being served at an earlier hour, and marched into the dining saloon just minutes before it was scheduled to close Monday morning. My steward was understandably annoyed, and reminded me of my sin of omission.

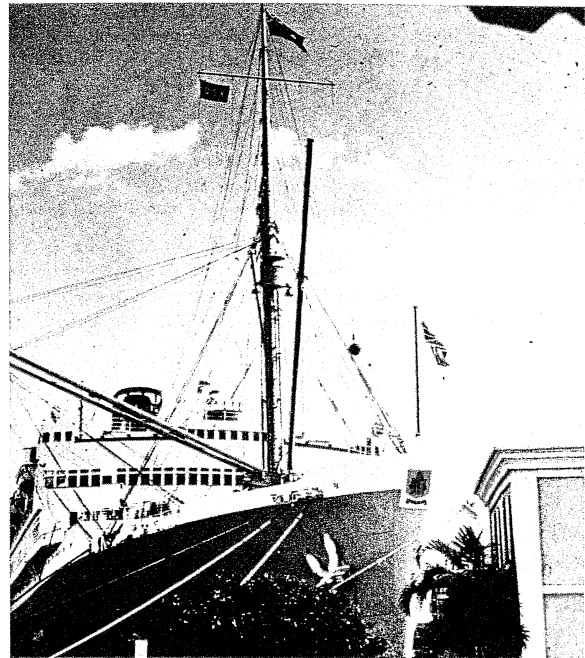
Taking my orange landing card, I hastened out with camera bag over my shoulder, to explore this land of pastels which I had caught but a glimpse of from my porthole. Although wind was blowing, it soon tapered off, and the air was balmy. The sky was blue, the water was that beau-

tiful shade of Bermuda Blue, the lovely homes were all pastel hues - pink predominant, with green, white, yellow and gray houses.

The main street of Hamilton was busy-busy, with lots of motorcycle and small auto traffic, and busses. The policeman standing just opposite QUEEN OF BERMUDA's prow, was elevated to a high pedestal, busy with his traffic problems. His Bermuda shorts and helmet gave him an exotic foreign-port look. I walked past the Secretariat, an ancient building surrounded by lawns and palms. Dodging the numerous vehicles, I crossed the street and proceeded to the tiny hamlets of Pembroke, Devonshire, Paget. I walked slowly, passing a British naval vessel, crew on deck busily working. A large Dutch ship lay in port. At Paget, a lovely little anchorage contained sailboats, cruisers, motorboats, the scene set off by pines, green grass, palms. I had walked almost to Elbow Beach, stopping to photograph the brilliant hibiscus, and to revel in the balmy weather in this enchanted land.

I next headed for a small bicycle-motorcycle rental place on the hill which held the shocking pink Hotel Bermudiana. The current rage was a motor bike or motorcycle, but an uninitiated lone cyclist I thought should have a pedal bike, so I started off, pedaling up the first of a series of formidable hills.

Continually forgetting that I was in British left-drive country, I would suddenly remember, veering off in front of patient motorists or truck drivers to take the proper side of the road. I was a menace to them and a hazard to myself.



QUEEN OF BERMUDA docked in Hamilton Harbor, Bermuda, (All photos, Jean Hess).

Bravely, I took off for the main street of Hamilton - Front Street, with all its cyclists and autos, past the mounted traffic officer who obligingly ignored me and my reckless driving. I finally admitted I was weary, and wanted to finish off the late afternoon hours with a foot trip to the attractive shops, and turned in my bicycle to the agency.

Passing a marina which advertised tours of the islands, I went down the wooden steps to inquire at the waterside office about a morning excursion, signing up finally for a 10 a.m. trip.

Back at QUEEN OF BERMUDA, many were preparing to go nightclubbing in the nearby hotel night spots. I only wanted to rest and get to bed as soon as possible; my feet were killing me, after a long walk through most of the attractive shops in Hamilton.

Tuesday morning the ship's passengers were to report to the Bermuda government official who had come aboard to examine landing cards and any alien papers. I hurried through my grape juice, chipped beef and hot chocolate, also fried potatoes, then went up to see the man. He looked at my card, then said "Miss Jean Hess. Are you an American citizen?" I said, "yes", and he asked "How did you get to be?", and the absurdity of the question caused my jaw to drop a little, but quickly hinge back into place to shriek in astonishment, "Why, I was BORN that way!" The fellow laughed, then said "Well, that's the easy way."

Formalities over, I made tracks over to the Williams Marina, and went aboard a cruiser with a dozen or so other folks. The sky gleamed and gloomed. I got out of my tipsy canvas chair as we started out, determined to get some good color pictures. After about 30 minutes we reached the place where all would go aboard the glass-bottom boat, a small thatch-roofed launch with wooden benches around the sides, from which one looked down into a glassed-in view of Davy Jones. The Negro navigator seemed to enjoy his job, and assured us that the fragile-looking glass for viewing would not break and let the water in. The greenish waters were populated with angel fish, coral, sea cucumbers and sponges.

Transferring back to the regular cruiser, I elected to sit in the stern, with a raincoat borrowed from the pilot draped around me - there had been a little rain, and besides, the boat kicked up a great deal of water. We passed an old fort which was called a casemate, and resembled the casemate at Old Point Comfort, Fort Monroe, Virginia; there were Great Sound, Marsgrove, some British Navy property, Long Bay, a big bridge, and the numerous coral reefs.

After lunch back on QUEEN OF BERMUDA I went ashore for a tour of some of the pretty shops again. At least two that I can recall were branches of London stores. As usual, after miles of walking, my feet were sounding off, and it was a relief to stretch out on my comfortable bed for a pre-dinner snooze, leaving on the tiny reading lamp so that I wouldn't oversleep. Heaven forbid that I should miss a meal!

Wednesday morning, I wanted to have another go at taking pictures so after breakfast walked almost to Elbow Beach. I rested awhile among the pine trees of another little anchorage located

just off Front Street, the busy main drag of Hamilton and then strolled over to sit in Paget Park - two immense stone benches bore carvings to the effect that Elizabeth and Philip had visited Bermuda in 1953. Neat and lovely, the park faced another view of a small anchorage, wonderfully picturesque, with pine trees and palm trees framing various views and angles. Too late I realized I had not gotten over to the perfume factory, the 3 p.m. departure was not far off, and after lunch, I readied my camera to take pictures of our departure from Hamilton. The day before, BRASIL had been in Hamilton, returning from a Caribbean cruise. The ship was white and regal, rising high out of the water.

QUEEN OF BERMUDA's squatty hull made her ideal for getting in and out of the shallow harbor. Not even a tug was required to do the usual honors. The lines were let go from the dock, and from a huge red and black cylindrical-shaped buoy which looked something like the agitating cylinder in an early washing machine my mother once had. We drifted away gently, with the soft music of an excellent steel band playing farewell calypso music on the dock. The strains of "Yellow Bird", "Mary Ann", and others lent glamor to the occasion. A crowd was on the dock. All of Bermuda was feeling nostalgic, for in just two more weeks, their beautiful lady, "QUEEN OF BERMUDA", would cease her weekly runs to the clean, lovely little islands. She had been coming there since 1933.

The day which had been sunny, suddenly changed to mist and rain - a tropical-type rainstorm, beating down for a few minutes, then ceasing and leaving in its wake a glorious rainbow which spanned the islands. It was regular Bali H'ai stuff.

I had a pot of tea, marmalade on bread, a chocolate éclair, then went to fill out my duty declaration paper. I suddenly felt a peculiar sensation - I decided to ignore it, but it did not go away. I went down to the little laundry just a few doors away, but pressing did not ease a feeling that I was beginning to admit must be old-fashioned seasickness. Feeling so great when we left Bermuda, I had elected not to take the usual dose of Dramamine, and now I was sick, sick, sick! I went out to pace the decks, not knowing which felt worse - my sick stomach, or my burning feet. The longer I walked, and the harder I concentrated on NOT being seasick, the worse I felt. I sat down on a wooden bench on the Sundeck, and got the overhead exhaust from the sanitary system. Feeling that the only cure was bed, I hurried down below, took a shower, and sank into the bed, firmly telling myself that I was NOT going to be sick.

My telephone rang about 9 p.m. It was the steward, wondering if I felt all right. I assured him that a burial at sea would not be necessary. I had slept right through the dinner hour, electing to avoid making Table 81 a disaster area. Again I slept, until 11 p.m., when the delicious fragrance of the midnight buffet wafted down from Deck A. Feebly, I considered dressing, and getting up there, for I was ravenous, but the delayed action of Dramamine had drugged me, and sleep won out for the rest of the night.

Thursday was sunny and warm, and after a savory omelet and cinnamon toast I joined the two



mile march around the Sundeck - 14 turns made the mileage. A PA system played an assortment of British marches, including the popular "Colonel Bogey", as well as "Stars And Stripes", "Hands Across the Sea", "King Cotton", "Washington Post", "Thunderer" and some other American marches. It was an odd sensation, to be marching along, out in the middle of an ocean, with this loud martial music blasting away. After dragging in as one of the last to finish, I received my certificate.

Before lunch, I went swimming, enjoying a brisk swim, at temperature registered as 76, but feeling more like 26. I twitted the two attendants about this hoax, and they, in the usual English seriousness which I had come to know so well, made me look at their gauge which indeed registered 76. I then insisted the gauge was wrong. (American nerve, they thought, I'm sure).

The farewell dinner would be a special affair, with formal-type apparel again in order, so it was black dress and matching shoes again.

That dinner!

Clams on the Half-Shell  
Clear Turtle Soup with Sherry  
Broiled Filet Mignon (fork-cutting tender)  
Assorted Vegetables (arranged in geometrical designs)

Rich mushroom sauce for the steak

Another treat was in store from the couple at Table 81 celebrating their 25th anniversary -- a bottle of fine dry French champagne and with it our magnificent dessert of Baked Alaska, brought in by our table steward, the delicacy aflame. Oh my. A small anniversary cake and a platter of sweets also appeared. The midnight buffet was just an hour and a half away!

Fred McCabe sends us this photo of the Ohio River

A program put on by the ship's orchestra and the dance team entertained passengers until buffet time. I knew any attempt to partake of any more goodies would have dire results, so went to 46-B and finished up my packing. The man on Deck A was doing similarly, but seemed to have a herd of elephants he was trying to pen up in the confines of a trunk. Or at least, that was the way it sounded.

Uneasy about facing the notorious U.S. customs officers, I did not sleep well. Once I dreamed I was rolling about, and when I woke up, discovered I was tossing about from the ship's motion. I felt the engines below, and dreading thought of how helpless a ship could be in case of failure of those powerful engines. The sea - and nature itself - was still master of men I thought.

After one last breakfast, and hasty farewells, I left the big ship, and hurried to get through the line of vultures who waited for me in the U.S. Customs lineup.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Musically inclined Miss Hess possesses a degree in music from Baldwin-Wallace Conservatory and a graduate degree from Columbia University Teachers College. After stints of work with the Department of the Army and Republic Steel Corp., she is now with the Erie Lackawanna Rwy. Co. in Cleveland.

Her interests in marine happenings led to this article. Her current project is detailed research on the last fateful trip of President Harding to the West and Alaska. (A nautical memento relating to this will appear soon in SB.)

### **SHIP IN PORT - THE CARINTHIA AND CUNARD'S CANADIAN QUARTET**

**By Bill Miller**

On a chilly December night in December 1966, a small group of World Ship Society members made their way over to Pier 92. There was a rather unusual Saturday night sailing: 10:00pm for Cunard's CARINTHIA. She was crossing to Liverpool. But, as I recall, the 868-passenger ship was quite empty. By the mid and late Sixties, normally peak summer sailings to Europe had fewer and fewer passengers and in winter even less. The old order had changed; travelers had begun going out to Kennedy Airport for speedy flights. We toured the CARINTHIA that night, took photos and sat in the dining room where a waiter reminded us that the chairs had been on the old Aquitania. That grand old four-stacker was retired in 1950, and the chairs were stored and until they reappeared when the CARINTHIA was commissioned in 1956.

Typically, we waited until sailing and then waved the 22,000-ton ship off from the open porch at the end of the pier. Her domed funnel was nicely illuminated, the whistles sounded and lighted portholes lined the lower decks. Finally, the Moran tugs released her and she was off. Suddenly, on that Saturday night, Luxury Liner Row was empty; the next passenger ship was not due until Monday morning.

The CARINTHIA was one of four sisters built by Cunard, but for its UK-Canada service - either London and Southampton or Liverpool and Greenock over to Quebec City and Montreal. The SAXONIA was the first of the quartet, commissioned in 1954 and followed by the IVERNIA (1955), CARINTHIA (1956) and finally the SYLVANIA (1957).

John Wenshaw joined a still large and profitable Cunard in 1958. He was nineteen and began as a junior chef. "I applied on Wednesday, was interviewed and hired on Thursday, and shipped out on the SYLVANIA, bound for Montreal, on Friday. Afterward, I moved ships quickly. Next, it was to the PARTHIA, a smaller ship. She was such a poor 'sea boat' - she'd go down at the Bar at Liverpool and not come up again until the Statue of Liberty eight days later. Next, it was to the BRITANNIC, for her Liverpool to New York crossings and her 65-day winter 'Meddy' [Mediterranean] cruise."

But John also recalled how it all changed. "First, we had to deal with the airlines and their devastating intrusion. They didn't just take most of our passengers, but ruthlessly grabbed them. Then the big British Maritime Strike in May-June 1966 was the turning point. I was on the CARINTHIA at the time when suddenly the Union steward came aboard a half-hour before sailing. We were almost ready to go, but he said 'get off.'" The strike lasted six weeks. It was devastating. Cunard hired scabs,

brought over from Newcastle hidden in furniture vans. But most of the ships were idle and Cunard and other lines lost millions. Things were never the same again."

John's last Cunarder was the *FRANCONIA*, then on the Southampton-Montreal run, in 1967. Afterward, he turned to shore side work – for bakeries and supermarkets.

Ships such as the 21,947-ton *CARINTHIA* became not just unprofitable, but highly unprofitable. In October 1967, she departed from Liverpool on Cunard's final crossing to Montreal. Afterward, she was laid-up, joining the likes of the *CARONIA* at Southampton, and both all but wearing "for sale" signs. The *QUEEN MARY* had been retired that September and, in October 1968, the *QUEEN ELIZABETH* would go as well.

In May 1968, the *CARINTHIA* (and her sister *SYLVANIA*) found new owners: the Monte Carlo-based Sitmar Line. She was renamed *FAIRLAND*, which was quickly changed to *FAIRSEA*, and was intended for use on the UK-Australia migrant run and around-the-world tourist trade. That was later revised to a planned triangular service: Australia-Far East-US West Coast. But then plans changed yet again; she would become a cruise ship instead. Taken to a Trieste shipyard, the ship was extensively rebuilt, both on the inside and out, and afterward had first class accommodations for as many as 910 passengers. She joined Sitmar Cruises, in December 1971, running cruises from San Francisco and Los Angeles to the Mexican Riviera (and summers north to Alaska and British Columbia). Her new life was very popular and profitable.

Her later years, however, were marked with changes. In the summer of 1988, Sitmar Cruises was bought by rival P&O-Princess Cruises and the *FAIRSEA* was rechristened as the *FAIR PRINCESS*. In 1997, she was moved over to P&O Australia and began running voyages from Sydney. She was sold off in 2000 to Hong Kong owners, who renamed her *CHINA SEA DISCOVERY* and ran her on short gambling cruises from Hong Kong and later from Keelung and Kaohsiung. These were problem-filled, disrupted and so largely unsuccessful, however, that the ship was laid-up within three years, in 2003. Two years later, the 49-year-old ship was towed off and delivered to scrappers at Alang in India.



Sisters together: The *IVERNIA* remains at Pier 90 as the *CARINTHIA* departs in the background in this view from 1959. (Bill Miller Collection)

### **REMEMBERING AL WILHELMI, 1932-2020**

**By Bill Miller**

While he did not attend World Ship Society's monthly meetings, Al Wilhelmi was a longtime fixture at the Society's annual Ocean Liner Bazaar. Al and his partner Chris always maintained three or four tables of keepsakes and treasures. And they always seemed to be on the far left side of the room. Happily, everything was offered for sale (and at reasonable prices) – from Cunard Line ashtrays to Holland America spoons, from oversized menus to those miniature Triang ship models. Al was also a friend for over forty years. Sadly, he passed away on July 15<sup>th</sup> at age 88, after a long illness and valiant struggle. "Like some ships, I've had not just a good run, but a very good run," he said in his last days.

A native of Philadelphia but living (for some fifty years) in suburban southwestern New Jersey, Al loved ocean liners (and also had deep interests in skyscrapers, cars, art, vintage Hollywood movies, British royalty, TV murder mysteries, opera and classical music) and amassed a huge collection. It was all maintained in the most organized and especially immaculate order. Every last piece was in precise, handpicked position. Luncheon and cocktail parties were organized around sofas, chairs and a long centered table – all surrounded by neatly placed, collected treasures. And these spilled over to the second floor of the house. It was diverse, bountiful to the eye and joyful to the soul, but somehow it was never, ever overwhelming. Al was the classic, almost specially trained "curator."



An architect by profession (with the Philadelphia Electric Company), Al (and Chris) also took to traveling by ship. Their earliest trips included crossings on the likes of the HANSEATIC, ROTTERDAM and STATENDAM. Many, many crossings and cruises followed. In between, he'd travel up to New York and wander over to the City's West Side, to Luxury Liner Row, and visit almost all of the great liners that came and went. The French Line's LIBERTE and the Dutch NIEUW AMSTERDAM were his favorites, he often told me. In later years, in happy retirement, Al also enjoyed his Cadillac cars, concerts in nearby Philadelphia, and those chatty get-togethers with other ship buffs.

A dear friend, an expert in several areas, an absolute world class collector, and always a keen supporter of World Ship's annual bazaar, Al Wilhelmi will be greatly missed.



## SHIP NEWS

By Bob Allen

**THE DEMISE OF CMV:** Very sad news came from the UK in late July. Cruise & Maritime Voyages collapsed, as it was unable to secure financing to get through the continuing cruise ban in Great Britain. Like Chandris America Line during the 1950's through 1990's, CMV built a fleet using older tonnage, preserving a remarkable amount of ocean liner history. Its two oldest ships were veteran transatlantic liners: the MARCO POLO (built as the ALEXANDR PUSHKIN for Baltic Shipping in 1965), and the ASTORIA (1948) (originally Swedish America Line's STOCKHOLM, of the infamous 1956 ANDREA DORIA collision). Although heavily rebuilt, both vessels retained much of the charm and intimacy of their earlier lives. Designed for year-round North Atlantic service, both had hulls built with shear, featured traditional boat decks for strolling, and dining rooms low in the hull for stability. In a hopeful sign, the CEO and Chairman of CMV, Christian Verhounig, purchased the mailing list, website, reservation system and other assets of the company in late August. While Mr. Verhounig is clearly looking towards eventually restarting the cruise line, no vessels were included in the sale. CMV did not own its fleet; all vessels were chartered by a variety of owners. In October, five of the former CMV fleet will be auctioned for sale: VASCO DA GAMA, ex-STATENDAM of 1993; COLUMBUS, ex-STAR PRINCESS of 1989; MAGELLAN, ex-HOLIDAY of 1985; ASTOR of 1987 and MARCO POLO. The ASTORIA charter was scheduled to end in October, and will presumably be returned to its owner, so she will not be included in the auction. These ships were maintained in excellent condition, yet it is difficult to picture a scenario where even one will be purchased for future service in the current cruise industry environment.

By coincidence, on September 14<sup>th</sup>, Atlantic Wreck Salvage announced that sections of the STOCKHOLM's crumpled bow and anchors had been located on the floor of the Atlantic Ocean, near the disintegrating hull of the ANDREA DORIA. Should the former STOCKHOLM conclude her remarkable 72-year career in 2020, how fitting that her legacy will continue with this amazing discovery.



With the demise of CMV, it is unlikely that the 1948-built ASTORIA, ex-STOCKHOLM (above, left at Bristol, UK) or the 1965-built MARCO POLO, ex-ALEXANDR PUSHKIN (above, right at Amsterdam, Netherlands) will sail again. With the exception of the QUEEN MARY 2, these two ships were the last in service that were built for transatlantic crossings.

(Bob Allen)

**FRED. OLSEN'S DRAMATIC MODERNIZATION:** Fred. Olsen Cruise Line made a major acquisition in July, purchasing Holland America Line's twin flagships ROTTERDAM (VI) and AMSTERDAM. These ships, completed in 1997 and 2000 as stretched versions of the STATENDAM-Class of 1993, are an ideal fit for the Fred. Olsen fleet. Fast vessels, designed to sail world cruises and everywhere in between, they are considered mid-sized in today's cruise market with a passenger capacity of approximately 1,400. Spacious staterooms, a wealth of public venues and substantial deck space all meet the new owners' requirements. However, this means the end of service for the BLACK WATCH and BOUDICCA, which the acquisitions will replace. This is a great loss for devotees of cruise ships of an earlier era. BLACK WATCH was delivered to the legendary Royal Viking Line as ROYAL VIKING STAR in 1972, and BOUDICCA followed as ROYAL VIKING SKY in 1973. Enormously successful ships, both were stretched to increase capacity in 1981. In an era when luxury cruise ships were mostly repurposed transatlantic liners, the Royal Viking fleet represented a vision of cruising's future. While cabins were generally small and none had balconies (until the enlargements), emphasis was placed on spacious public areas with ultra-modern Scandinavian design, single-seating dining, gourmet cuisine and top-rated service. Exotic itineraries were displayed in a yearly "Royal Viking Cruise Atlas." Brand loyalty to the new company was remarkable. An unsuccessful takeover by Norwegian Caribbean Cruise Lines of Royal Viking in 1984 resulted in the sale of the individual ships in the 1990's. Fred. Olsen purchased ROYAL VIKING STAR in 1996, followed by her sister ten years later. Both vessels were re-engined and kept in immaculate condition by the new owners; major overhauls took place during the last few years. No doubt the historic and well-loved BLACK WATCH and BOUDICCA could have continued for several more years, well past their 50<sup>th</sup> birthdays. Instead, their end will most likely be another casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Fred. Olsen's BLACK WATCH (ex-ROYAL VIKING STAR) docked at Bremen, Germany on September 22, 2017 (above, left); Holland America's ROTTERDAM (VI), rechristened as Fred. Olsen's BOREALIS, departing New York on October 22, 2018. (above, right) (Bob Allen)

**FAREWELL TO A SOVEREIGN:** Royal Caribbean Cruises' groundbreaking SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS (1988) was beached at Aliaga, Turkey in July, and her demolition is now well underway. She has plenty of company; sister ship MONARCH OF THE SEAS, CARNIVAL FANTASY and CARNIVAL INSPIRATION were all lined up for scrapping within a few days. SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS was a historically important vessel, the first newly constructed "megaship" of the modern cruise era. When the French Line's retired FRANCE (1962) was purchased by Norwegian Caribbean Cruise Line and rebuilt in 1980 as NORWAY, a new cruise era began. For the next seven years she was by far the world's largest cruise ship, approached in size only by the dual-purpose QE2. NCCL's competition, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, observed the enormous success of the NORWAY and in the mid 1980's decided it was time to act. They designed SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS from the keel up to be a new breed of cruise ship, the first to exceed NORWAY's tonnage. At almost 74,000 tons, she was upon completion the fourth largest passenger liner ever built. She was constructed in the same shipyard as the former French Line flagship, and even took some design queues from FRANCE's predecessor, the NORMANDIE of 1935. RCCL pointed to the uniquely sculptured stern and clipper bow as reminiscent of the legendary NORMANDIE. Inside, SOVERIGN was revolutionary. Cruise passengers were greeted by a five-level atrium ringed with connecting staircases and ramps, all sheathed in polished brass and glass balustrades. Twin dining rooms were required to accommodate the huge passenger list. These were set one above the other and accessed through the atrium, which became a vast gathering space buzzing with activity and music before and after mealtimes. Most public areas were stacked aft of the atrium, with cabins forward to minimize exposure to noise. A similar arrangement was tested on RCCL's smaller SONG OF AMERICA (1982), and was seen on European ferries and a handful of German luxury vessels of the early 1980's. But SOVERIGN introduced these features and more to weekly Miami-based cruising at a scale unrivaled in the industry. She hosted former President Carter on her maiden voyage from Miami, accompanied by former first lady Rosalynn Carter, who performed the naming ceremony in January 1988. Following her immediate success, RCCL soon ordered two sister ships – MONARCH and MAJESTY OF THE SEAS. Now, only MAJESTY remains, and Royal Caribbean plans to base her in New Orleans once cruising restarts. Hopefully she will return to service, a link to a fascinating period in cruise history.

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