



“MARITIME ROYALTY: BRITAIN’S QUEENS OF THE ATLANTIC”

By Bill Miller

FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2024, 6:30 PM
JOIN US VIA ZOOM

They are the most famous ocean liners of all time: the original QUEEN MARY and QUEEN ELIZABETH, luxury in peace, heroics in war, and followed by the QE2, then QUEEN MARY 2 and three other Queens: QUEEN VICTORIA, QUEEN ELIZABETH, and the new QUEEN ANNE. There is no one better than Bill Miller to review the glorious history of these great Cunarders!



(Bill Miller Collection)



About Our Presenter: Called “Mr. Ocean Liner”, Bill Miller is considered an international authority on the subjects of ocean liners and cruise ships. He has written over 100 books on the subject. Bill, a world traveler with hundreds of sea voyages, is a much sought-after presenter and blogger. He is also a career educator. A lifelong member, Bill was a founding member of the WSS-PONY Branch. Bill was named Outstanding American Maritime Scholar in 1994 and received the U.S. Maritime Preservation Award and the Ocean Liner Council’s Silver Riband Award in 2004. Additionally, he was the 2017 recipient of SSHSA’s Samuel Ward Stanton Award for Lifetime Achievement.

ADDITIONAL MEMBER EVENTS

SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2024, 10 AM ENCORE presentation via ZOOM
“GENESIS OF A QUEEN: QUEEN MARY 2” by Dr. Stephen M. Payne, O.B.E.

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2024, 10 AM ENCORE presentation via ZOOM
“GRACE LINE COMBO SHIPS TO SOUTH AMERICA” by George Gillow

“VICTORIA OLD AND NEW”

By Tom Rinaldi

FRIDAY, April 26, 2024, 6:30 PM

JOIN US VIA ZOOM

Fearing that the end might be near for one of the most interesting veteran passenger ships on the planet, WSS-PONY Branch member Tom Rinaldi set off in 2023 for Tanzania in East Africa, where the former R.M.S. VICTORIA has provided service across her namesake lake for most of the last 70 years. Reaching Lake Victoria after a two-day rail journey across the country, Rinaldi managed to secure passage over-and-back aboard this little-known "liner on the lake" before it was too late. In this presentation, he will share the story of his most recent African adventure, including a look at the history of the old VICTORIA and the future of ferry traffic on the lakes of Africa's Great Rift Valley.



R.M.S. VICTORIA, Bukoba, Tanzania

(Wikipedia Photo)



About Our Presenter: Thomas Rinaldi grew up in the Hudson River Valley near Poughkeepsie, New York. He is the author of “Patented: 1,000 Design Patents” (Phaidon, 2021), “New York Neon” (W.W. Norton, 2012) and the co-author of the book “Hudson Valley Ruins: Forgotten Landmarks of an American Landscape” (University Press of New England, 2006). His photographs have been published in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the New York Post, the New York Observer, Westchester Magazine, CNN Online, and elsewhere. Tom exhibited at the New York State Museum in Albany and at the Municipal Art Society of New York. He is a regular contributor to the UK-based magazine "Ships Monthly." Rinaldi holds degrees from Georgetown University and Columbia University, and has worked for the National Park Service, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, and the Central Park Conservancy, and currently works as an architectural designer in New York City.

MEMBER NEWS
**BERNIE GRANDJANY: A GOOD FRIEND, GREAT KINDNESS
& CROSSING ON THE NORMANDIE**
By Bill Miller



Bernie Grandjany aboard the ROTTERDAM and coincidentally at Pier 88,
where he had first landed 86 years earlier. *(Bill Miller Photo)*

From the beginning at the World Ship Society- PONY Branch, Bernie Grandjany and I were friends, for almost 60 years. He was always kind, generous, supportive and – because of his special role with the American Red Cross – had the early, convenient use of a big, black car (and uniquely, in those days, with its very own phone). Bernie sometimes took some younger members such as myself on drives around the port, and on enriching and enlightening excursions to the likes of the opera, the theater, and to other special events. Through the Red Cross, Bernie himself was also a link to dramatic events in the port: a pier fire over in Brooklyn, the sinking of a tug in the East River and, in September 1966, a fire aboard the liner HANSEATIC at Pier 84. Sadly, Bernie passed away in late February.

Bernie had a very interesting career. After Bernie finished his schooling, he began work with the American Red Cross. He rose through the ranks and eventually was appointed Assistant Director of Disaster Services in the greater New York area. He held this position for twenty-five years, retiring in 1981. Answering calls in the middle of the night, he could be found at every fire, flood, and natural disaster affecting the citizens of New York City. He was tireless in his efforts to help those most impacted by disaster and loss. He was appointed an Honorary Deputy Fire Chief with the Fire Department of New York in 1982 for services rendered to the City of New York.

The New York City Firefighters Association added, “If you been around FDNY back in the 60’s, you might remember a newsletter printed on white paper from the Third Alarm Association that was always found at the house watch desk. Bernie was the editor for years. Or could it have been possible that he was the person who handed you a hot cup of soup or coffee at three a.m. on an extremely cold and windy day during a multiple alarm fire from the Red Cross canteen truck. Yet, there is a lot about Bernie that too many of us never knew.”

Beginning in the late 1960s, Bernie was also president of the New York Chapter of the Steamship Historical Society of America. He organized monthly meetings, occasional weekend excursions and shared use (sometimes with WSS-PONY) of the large auditorium at the American Red Cross center at West 66th Street. Bernie was very loyal and continued to attend monthly meetings until just months before his passing.

Bernie was also a kind of maritime royalty. He was one of the very few WSS-PONY members to have not only been aboard the iconic super liner NORMANDIE but sailed aboard that great ship as well. In 2014, Bernie wrote the foreword for my book on great French passenger ships and recalled his passage to New York:

“I was born in Paris in 1930. My father was a well-recognized musician. He played the harp. He had gone to America on concert tours in the 1920s and early '30s, of course always by sea, and onboard such French Line ships as the ROCHAMBEAU, LAFAYETTE, CHAMPLAIN and, of course, his favorite, the ILE DE FRANCE. He had very vivid memories of these ships and especially those crossings. In 1937, he was offered a professorship of the harp at the prestigious Julliard School in New York City. Suddenly, but also excitedly, we prepared to leave Paris and move to Manhattan.”



The NORMANDIE arriving in New York

(Bill Miller Collection)

“Finally, in September 1937, we were booked – sailing westbound from Le Havre on none other than the great NORMANDIE. We were in fact ‘emigrating’ on the most luxurious liner of its time! But even greater good fortune awaited – my father was asked to give concerts during the 5-day voyage and in compensation we were upgraded to first class. Could there have been anything more lavish than sailing to America in the high splendors of first class on the glorious NORMANDIE?”



The French Line flagship berthed at Pier 88.

(Bill Miller Collection)

Bernie concluded, “There was absolutely nothing like the French Line and, of course, most especially the NORMANDIE. Quite simply, the French liners were all very ‘classy’. Once aboard, you felt you were in a part of France itself. They had this great, very discernible expertise in shipboard operation, in running what were some of the grandest floating hotels on the seas. French ships, I felt, had great, very obvious ambience plus the finest cuisine, the very best decor and some of the greatest examples of Art Deco afloat. They were so unique. More specifically, I always remember the bellboys, the muses, in their bright red uniforms with gleaming gold buttons and their hats with the leather strap under the chin. French Line ships even smelled differently – usually of the finest of French perfumes.

My father continued to sail in the 1950s, usually on the ILE DE FRANCE. He never used either the LIBERTE or FLANDRE. Myself, I had only that one French Line crossing, but sailing on the NORMANDIE has always been, well, my personal ‘claim to fame’. There aren't many of us left these days!”

* * *

***JOIN US for regular meetings with speakers on maritime topics,
local outings, group cruises, friends & more!***



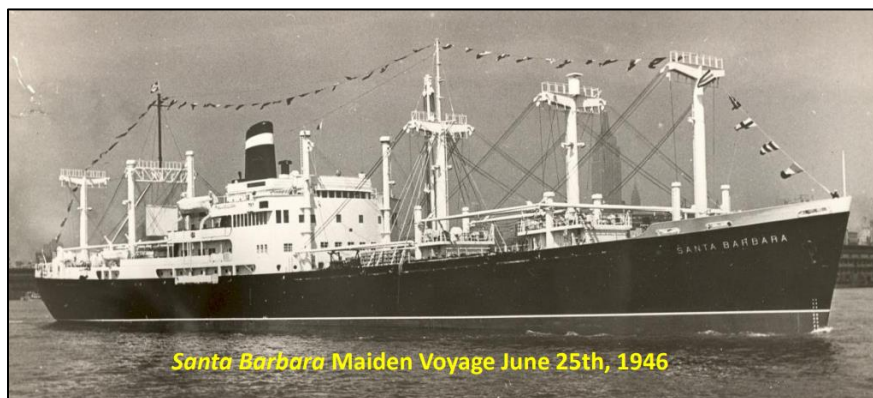
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SHIP'S LOG

“GRACE LINE COMBO SHIPS TO SOUTH AMERICA” by George Gillow

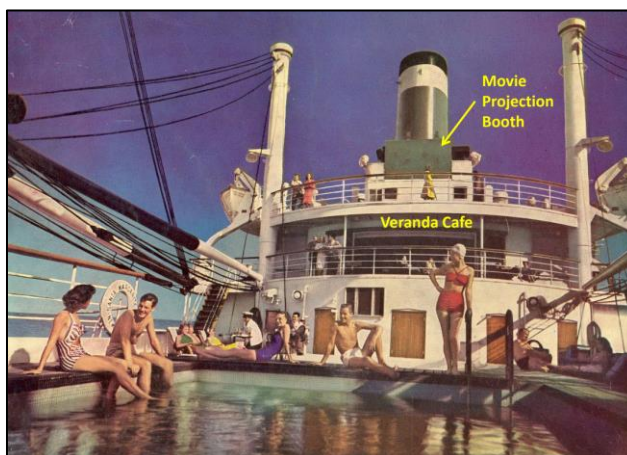
Review By Pat Dacey

At our virtual membership meeting on February 23, 2024, the WSS-PONY Branch was pleased to welcome George Gillow, who presented from California. His program, “Grace Line Combo Ships to South America” was his first-person account of the adventure of growing up in the 1950’s in an American mining town in northern Chile and the excitement of traveling on Grace Line passenger-freighters. This route and the ships that sailed them, a significant story in maritime history, are often overlooked in many maritime accounts. George’s program offered a fascinating glimpse into the mission of these ships and what life was like onboard.



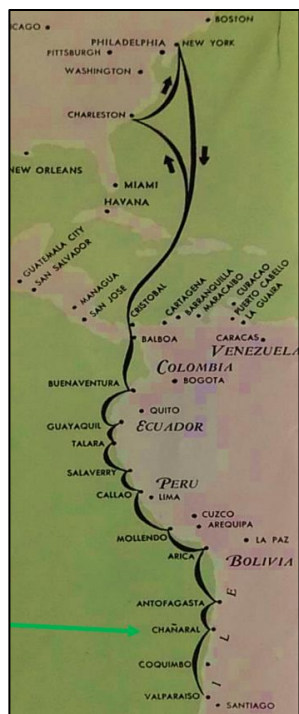
(George Gillow Collection)

George’s father was an employee of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, an American mining company headquartered in Butte, Montana and one of the largest mining companies in the world for much of the twentieth century. With his father posted in Potreillos, Chile, a copper mining and smelter town, George and his family were able to join him in Chile. George spent most of his childhood in South America. In addition, thanks to the company policy, employees and their families were offered 3-month vacations to the U.S. every three years. On these roundtrips, George and his family were able to enjoy 38-day Grace Line combo ship voyages. Much of the presentation focused on what it was like traveling on those passenger-freighters. George also shared his views on how his earlier Grace Line experiences compared to traveling on modern cruise ships.



Grace Line pool-side outdoor “CinemaScope”. *(George Gillow Collection)*

Sailing round trip from New York to and from the Port of Barquito (Owned by USA Anaconda Mining Company), Grace Line operated nine ships with six ships built from the same plans carrying 52 passengers, and 9,000 tons of cargo and all named after female saints. Grace Line advertised these “Art Deco-Club Styled” ships with 20 outside cabins and exceptionally fashionable public rooms. The ships had a very pleasing arrangement that made them intimate yet not lacking in amenities. Some of these amenities included outdoor “CinemaScope” movies, swimming pool, availability of fresh provisions, nurse/stewardess and a hospital. In his presentation, George used period advertisements and ephemera including many images of the interior spaces as well as personal photographs to provide the viewer with an overview of life onboard for employees, their families, and company and mining visitors, but few actual “tourists”.



Grace Lines Route Map
(George Gillow Collection)

The primary mission of these Grace Line ships was handling cargo in both directions to ensure that cargo space was maximized to capacity each way. From the United States during a south bound voyage, cargo mainly consisted of American made manufactured goods and vehicles including heavy equipment such as locomotives. The north bound voyage had a very diverse cargo manifest starting with fresh fruits and vegetables from the turn – around port of Valparaiso, Chile. Sailing north to the Port of Barquito, copper ingots were loaded and further north it was shrimp at the Port of Chimbote, Peru. Continuing the voyage to Lima, Peru, where tin, quinine, lead, coca leaves and silver were added to the cargo manifest. While at Mollendo, Peru, fish was loaded into the refrigerated holds. Arriving at Salaverry, Peru, molasses was loaded into special tanks from WR Grace (parent company of Grace Line) who owned the plantations. Stopping in Ecuador, the ships loaded what was considered one of their most significant cargoes, bananas, with the must-meet banana pick-up “Ban Date” assigned for each voyage. The last port on the north bound voyage was Buenaventura, Columbia, where the remaining cargo space was loaded with coffee. Further north, the ships transited the Panama Canal before a five-day run to New York where the ships would take the next four days to unload and then load cargo for the return voyage.

Following his presentation, George participated in a robust Q&A session with many interesting questions and comments about shared experiences from our members. We thank George for his personal recollections and informative account of an interesting period in maritime history.



SANTA LUISA, northbound. (Photo taken by George Gillow in 1957 with his “Brownie” camera.)

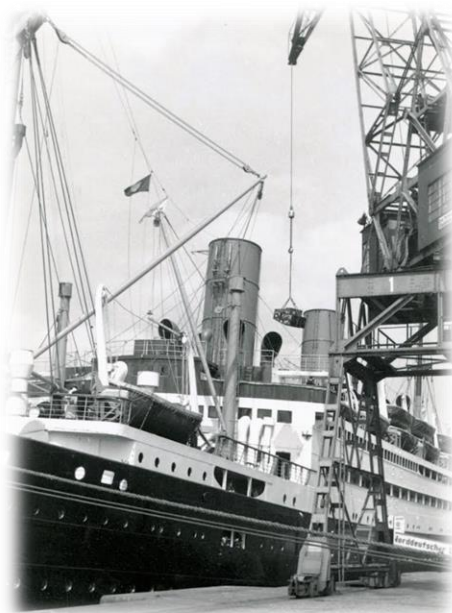
SHIPS IN PORT: BYGONE SOVIET LINERS

By Bill Miller

Michael Tsaler is a longtime shipboard friend as well as a onetime dance host aboard cruise lines such as Cunard and Crystal. A native of Odessa, he worked as a chef in the Passenger Ship Terminal there until moving to America in 1988, in fact to the south shore of Brooklyn, New York, which had so many Russians, and particularly Ukrainians, it had been fondly dubbed "Little Odessa".

Over afternoon tea onboard the QUEEN MARY 2, Michael recently recalled the many Soviet passenger ships that had Odessa as a homeport and many of which ran regular voyages along the Black Sea coast. Some were newer ships – such as the TARAS SCHEVHENKO and IVAN FRANKO, others were refitted such as the LEONID SOBINOV and FEODOR SHALYAPIN (both ex-Cunarders) while still others were quite old, often pre-World War II vintage, usually former Nazi-German ships acquired as reparations or salvaged in the late 1940s, after the War ended.

One was the ADMIRAL NAKHIMOV. It had been the BERLIN, built in 1925 for the North German Lloyd and often used on the Atlantic run between Bremerhaven, Southampton, Cherbourg, and New York. A rather ordinary ship, it had twin funnels, but altogether was rather small at a mere 15,000 tons. It did carry, however, as many as 1,300 passengers in three classes. Repainted in all-white and used as a Nazi hospital ship during the War years, it was a casualty in the end – or at least most onlookers thought.



The BERLIN loading at Bremerhaven in a view from the late 1930s.
(Bill Miller Collection)

The BERLIN was sunk after striking a mine in the port of Swinemunde, in February 1945, just three months before the Nazi surrender. Swinemunde later became part of East Germany and therefore Soviet-controlled territory. In a long, tedious process lasting four years, the badly damaged, 572-ft long liner was finally salvaged and then deemed worthy of full repairs. In an East German shipyard, these took a further and very lengthy eight years. The restored ship was finally re-commissioned as the ADMIRAL NAKHIMOV in 1957. Among Soviet liners in the Black Sea, the 16-knot, twin-screw ship was the "queen" of the fleet.

The NAKHIMOV sailed for an extraordinary 61 years, but then had a tragic demise. After colliding with another Soviet ship, the bulk carrier PETR VASEV, on the night of August 31, 1986, the old liner's days were over. The aged NAKHIMOV was mortally wounded and sank within minutes – and, with little time to fully abandon ship, had the tragic loss of 398 passengers and crew. Even in the highly controlled Soviet Union, the news spread everywhere -- and was both horrifying and dramatic. The captains of both ships were later found to be drunk at the time of the collision, then deemed guilty in the court hearings that followed and finally were sentenced to long prison terms.



Rebuilt in the 1950s, the ADMIRAL NAKHIMOV now had low, squat funnels. (Mick Lindsay Collection)

"Many people in Odessa were very angry. They lost family and friends," recalled Michael. "At the time, the NAKHIMOV was carrying far more passengers than usual – family and friends of crew members who were sailing free and so not on the manifest. It was a huge tragedy throughout the USSR. It was the worst maritime tragedy in peacetime Soviet history. I remember that during the trial, the captains were kept in the special KGB prison and were moved to the court room by way of an underground tunnel and under heavy guard. Many people wanted to kill them. They were kept in very tight steel cages when they were moved about."

* * *

JOIN THE FUN ON A SSSA 5-DAY/4-NIGHT CARNIVAL RADIANCE CRUISE
November 11 – 15, 2024, Long Beach and Catalina Island, CA, Ensenada, MX
SSSA 2024 Annual Meeting & special pre-cruise events will be held onboard the
legendary Queen Mary Hotel Long Beach, CA!



CRUISE DETAILS

Interior from \$222/pp, Ocean View from \$284/pp, Balcony from \$382/pp, +taxes/fees.

Includes private cocktail party & other group perks!

\$100 per booking refundable deposit until 7/15/24.

Call CARNIVAL directly at 866-721-3225 with SSSA group #W3G9H4 to reserve.

OPTIONAL QUEEN MARY HOTEL STAY FOR 1, 2, or 3 NIGHTS

Nov 8 – Nov 10, 2024, from \$199/night +taxes/fees. No cancellation fee until 8/29/24.

SHIP NEWS: QUEEN ANNE COMPLETES SEA TRIALS

Compiled By Pat Dacey



QUEEN ANNE "at sea".

(Cunard Photo)

During the month of February, Cunard's new QUEEN ANNE spent 16 days at sea for her first sea trials receiving a passing grade from the builder, Fincantieri, and Cunard. Captain Inger Klein Thorhauge, "Master Designate" for QUEEN ANNE also gave her high praise. During the passage from Venice to Palermo and back, QUEEN ANNE went through critical tests of everything to the extreme, from the propulsion system to the bow thrusters and the stabilizers. In addition, the ship went through a series of situations to see how she handled from full speed ahead to full speed astern including tight turns, fast turns, slow turns, and crash stops. All technologies including complex computer and electronic systems were assessed and calibrated to ensure that they met the required specifications.



Captain Inger Klein Thorhauge with QUEEN ANNE in the background *(Cunard Photo)*

The sea trials were the first time that the ship moved under her own power and was a significant event in the project which has spanned several years. After sea trials, QUEEN ANNE was taken into dry dock at Palermo to paint the hull as the shipbuilder continued their efforts to ready the ship for delivery.

LIVERPOOL CHOSEN TO HOST SPECTACULAR CEREMONY FOR CUNARD'S NEW QUEEN ANNE



(Cunard Image.)

More QUEEN ANNE news, as Liverpool, Cunard's spiritual home, has been chosen to host the Naming Ceremony for its newest ship.

The ceremony will take place on the world-famous Mersey waterfront at Liverpool on Monday, June 3, during a celebratory "lap of honor" around the British Isles as part of The British Isles Festival Voyage.

QUEEN ANNE is expected to arrive on the Mersey soon after sunrise on what promises to be the most eagerly awaited port of call on the exclusive 14-night voyage.

Plans are being made for her arrival to include a special salute to the city where Cunard's pioneering Transatlantic service – and passenger shipping itself – was launched in 1840, and where the iconic Cunard Building forms the centerpiece of the "Three Graces".

Cunard's hosts for the ceremony include Matt Willis from the British pop group Busted, and his TV presenter wife, Emma Willis.

As with all recent Cunard events held in Liverpool, the QUEEN ANNE Naming Ceremony is expected to draw tens of thousands of spectators to vantage points alongside the river at Pier Head, between New Brighton and Seacombe on Wirral, and on beaches at Formby and Crosby in Sefton. A live global broadcast will ensure the eyes of the world once again fall on a Cunard event in Liverpool.

Katie McAlister, President of Cunard, said: "Cunard has an incredible bond with the city of Liverpool. It is where our founder Sir Samuel Cunard began his transatlantic line in 1840, so what better place to officially name our new ship than somewhere that holds so many special memories? QUEEN ANNE is the next in a fine line for our brand and she will be bursting with breath-taking moments around every corner, evolving our core values of luxury, sophistication, and glamour. Liverpool is known the world over as Cunard's spiritual home and we are all so excited for the city to see QUEEN ANNE up close on her maiden call."

Later this year WSS-PONY Branch will present a program on the Cunard Naming Ceremony, its new ship, QUEEN ANNE, and its British Isles voyage.

**MEMBER ACTIVITY
EMPIRE STATE VII SHIP TOUR**

**SAVE THE DATE
SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 9:30AM – 1PM
SUNY Maritime, Fort Schuyler, NY**



(New York Media Boat Photo)

In September 2023, Maritime College SUNY welcomed the arrival of its new state-of-the-art training ship, the EMPIRE STATE VII, the first of five new government-owned National Security Multi-Missions Vessels (NSMV's). Built by Philly Shipyard in Philadelphia, PA, it is the first of five sister ships that will serve as a training ship and offer floating classrooms for 600 cadets while at sea for the nation's five state maritime academies. It will also serve as a humanitarian and disaster relief platform with accommodations for up to 1,000 and to include modern hospital facilities and a helicopter pad.

WSS-PONY members will be welcomed aboard for a very interesting cadet-guided tour on the EMPIRE STATE VII at SUNY Maritime at Fort Schuyler, New York. *Stay tuned for details!*

Members may submit the following for consideration for publication in The Porthole: photos, news, cruise details, and articles that may be of interest to your fellow members. Please direct submissions to wsspony@gmail.com. Please note published materials are subject to editing and are not necessarily the opinion of the WSS-PONY Branch.

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World Ship Society - Port of New York Branch
Income and Expense Report for 1/1/2023 through 12/31/2023

INCOME

Interest	\$389.07
Membership Dues	\$6,628.31
Special Activities	\$583.65
Ocean Liner Bazaar	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$104.37
Donations	\$0.00
Total	\$7,705.40

EXPENSES

Auditorium Rental	\$2,626.00
Printer	\$316.25
Postage & Copies	\$99.92
Website and Technology	\$1,749.07
Honoraria	\$800.00
Refreshments	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$739.54
Special Activities	\$2,253.63
Ocean Liner Bazaar	\$0.00
Contributions	\$650.00
Accountant's Fee	\$0.00
Insurance	\$309.00
Total	\$9,543.41

Net Total: **(\$1,838.01)**