



ALONG THE BURMA ROAD A TOUR BEHIND THE SCENES OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

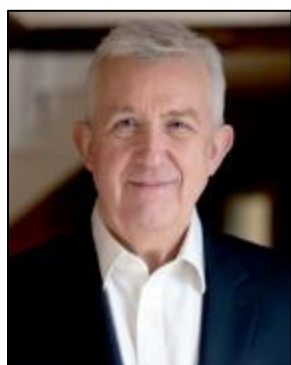
By Alastair Greener

JOIN US VIA ZOOM Friday, January 31, 6:30 PM



QUEEN ELIZABETH (Photo: Cunard)

ALONG THE BURMA ROAD looks behind the scenes and the logistics of a modern ship, Cunard's QUEEN ELIZABETH. With more than 100 exclusive pictures, Alastair will take the audience from one end of the ship to the other, along the main crew working alleyway (which has the nickname "The Burma Road" on Cunard ships). Alastair will share operational details from the food and beverage department, as well as details about storage and waste disposal. Additionally, and of course, what behind the scenes ship tour would be complete without visiting the engine control room, bridge, and the laundry.



Maritime lecturer and former Cunard Entertainment Director, **Alastair Greener**, brings his passion for Cunard history to Cunard ship audiences as well as audiences throughout the UK. Extensively researched, his talks are packed with remarkable photos and numerous stories that bring Cunard's fascinating history to life.

GRAND & GLORIOUS: THE GREAT CUNARD LINE

By William Miller

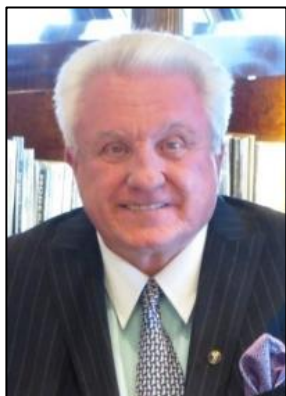
JOIN US VIA ZOOM Friday, February 28, 6:30 PM



On its 185th anniversary, former chairman Bill Miller will take us on a grand review of the Cunard Line, quite possibly the most famous shipping company on all the seas. Few shipping lines have had the great history to match Cunard.

Bill will begin just after the Second World War as Cunarders, including the legendary QUEEN ELIZABETH & QUEEN MARY, return from strenuous war duties, the Company assembles the biggest passenger ship fleet on the North Atlantic. They would have 14 liners at one point and carry as much as a quarter of all trans-ocean passengers. Bill will review the fleet, revive the glamor and style of crossings, from film stars to steamer trunks, and take us from the likes of beloved MAURETANIA and CARONIA to the current QUEEN MARY 2 and the new QUEEN ANNE.

The whistles are sounding -- all aboard on Cunard!



Called "Mr. Ocean Liner", **William 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. Bill is 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, Bill was the 2017 recipient of SSHSA's Samuel Ward Stanton Award for Lifetime Achievement.

(Images: William Miller Collection)

MEMBER ACTIVITIES



WSS-PONY members and friends are photographed enjoying a wonderful afternoon at the southern California home of ocean liner historian and journalist as well as ocean liner artifact collector and dealer, Peter Knego (in the foreground at the right-hand corner).

Thank you, Peter, for opening your amazing home for our visit!

(Photo: Peter Knego)

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WORLD SHIP SOCIETY – PORT OF NEW YORK **RATIFICATION OF OFFICERS FOR 2025-2026**

Pursuant to Section VIII of the constitution of the World Ship Society-Port of New York Branch, an election of the slate of officers presented by the PONY Branch Election Committee was conducted in November 2024. As compared to our current slate of officers, no additional nominations were made.

As such, a ratification ballot was mailed to all current members with the following ballot outcome:

Chairperson: Denise Dacey

Vice-Chairman: Pat Dacey

Membership Secretary: Stuart Gewirtzman

Branch Secretary: CAPT James Zatwarnicki

Treasurer: Marjorieann Matuszek

MEMBER PHOTOS



Cunard's QUEEN MARY 2 berthed at Red Hook, Brooklyn, December 3, 2024. (Photo: G. Justin Zizes)



Royal Caribbean's ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS docked in Port Canaveral, Florida, December 27, 2024
(Photo: Denise Dacey)



CARNIVAL SUNSHINE (left) and CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE (right), docked in Nassau, Bahamas, December 28, 2024 (Photo: Denise Dacey)



Disney's WISH at Castaway Cay, Nassau, Bahamas, December 29, 2024 (Photo: Denise Dacey)

UPCOMING MEMBER EVENT

DUTCH LINERS TO THE FAR EAST

By Capt. Albert Schoonderbeek

Fleetmaster Holland America Line (Retired)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 10 AM ENCORE PRESENTATION



**WSS-PONY 60TH ANNIVERSARY 5-NIGHT GROUP CRUISE
ABOARD THE CELEBRITY SUMMIT OCT 13 – OCT 18, 2025
FT. LAUDERDALE - KEY WEST – BAHAMAS – FT. LAUDERDALE
MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW**

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

A SENTEMENTAL LOOK AT DECK PLANS OVER THE YEARS

By Alan Zamchick

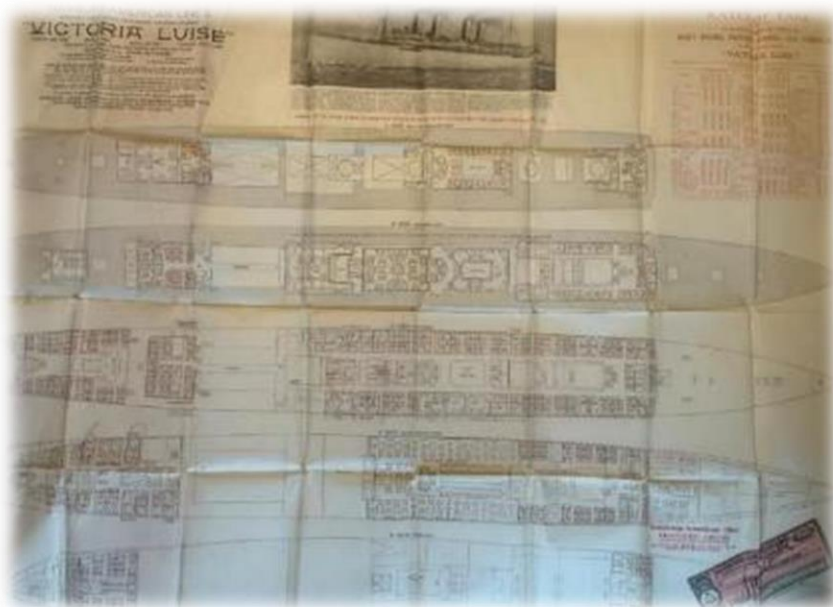
One category of ocean liner paper ephemera resonates almost universally as the favorite among collectors. That, fair readers, is the deck plan. With a deck plan you can tour virtually every ship. Every nook and cranny of the interior (and exterior) of a ship's "rabbit warren" of passageways, corridors, decks, and in limited cases engine spaces are there for exploration. Up through the dire days of the mid-1970s, when the sad march to the breakers took the vast majority of worldwide passenger ships, deck plans were a tonic for ship aficionados between sailings. All of them contained wonderful detail. Public room seating, passenger cabin appointments, bathroom fittings, all appeared throughout the plan. If you couldn't visit the line offices themselves, you'd rely on your local travel agent files or written requests to the ship line home office no matter where in the world they were located. You'd either be greeted by enthusiastic agents offering handfuls of deck plans for out-of-service ships or have the insufferable yet anticipatory wait for a mailed response. If you weren't sailing soon – you could plan to sail, or at least hope to – and you'd know exactly on which ship and in which cabin.

For me, collecting deck plans began as an 11-year-old in Trieste, Italy, helped along by the most amazing woman, Sylvia, in the local CIT office (CIT was the nationalized Italian Tourism Company that sadly folded soon after privatization came in 1996). Every weekend I'd bus down to the Piazza Della Borsa and walk the few blocks to Piazza Unita where Sylvia would smilingly greet me. The fun would start when she'd throw open what to me was the "vault" – her library of brochures, filled with deck plans for the taking. Promotional deck plans have always differed from the extreme builder plans and schematics one would find in books such as Marine Engineering. Sure, occasionally those plans would include cabin or public room details – or annoyingly – only one half of each deck would include seating or cabin appointments. But it was the promotional detailed deck plan that was often accompanied with, initially, black and white and later brilliant color photos of all those wonderful spaces you could excitedly tour. It wasn't always that way so let's take a look back.

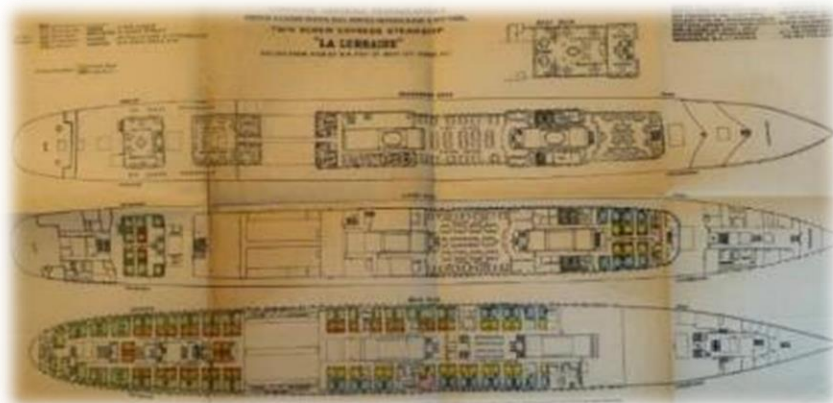
Consider, if you will, the 1869's simple Cabin Plan that was "tipped into" "The Voyage to Europe Handbook" for "Parties Contemplating" a TRIP TO EUROPE issued by William Bingham, Jr. for Anchor Line's SS COLUMBIA. The COLUMBIA was tiny compared to later standards, only weighing in at 1,698 gross tons and 283 feet long. The Cabin Plan (*below*) only counts 54 bunks. Take notice that only bunks are counted for – there are no cabin numbers – most material claims there was room for 80 – and another 500 plus could be accommodated in Steerage. Obviously in a promotional booklet, there was no room for that! Note too on this Saloon Deck, the Captain had his solo cabin. Peer into the saloon where tables, seats and sofas are identified, there is, too, a piano against the forward bulkhead!



As years passed it didn't take long for shipping lines and their agents to recognize the value of offering a prospective client a specific cabin. Meanwhile, the ships began doubling in size. By 1900, the German 4-stacker DEUTSCHLAND, now 10 times the size of little COLUMBIA wrested the Blue Riband from the KAISER WILHELM der GROSSE. After an unsatisfactory career on the transatlantic route (she vibrated terribly) Hamburg-America refitted her accommodations and engines and by 1910 renamed her VICTORIA LUISE. She was a very popular cruise ship. Her highly detailed 1913 Cabin Plan of the "Specially Constructed Twin-Screw Cruising Steamer" was printed on delicate tissue paper (*below*) which had come into vogue in the preceding years to serve purpose for the recent new record-breakers and measured 2 ¾ ft. x 3 ½ ft! A travel agents' dream, it vividly detailed not only every single-class passenger cabin, lounge, dining room and "Tea Room" but included the indoor pool, electric light baths, hairdressing and manicure parlors, dark room photography, a tourist office, cruise rates and capped it all off with an ad for Hamburg-American (sic) Lines Traveler Checks!

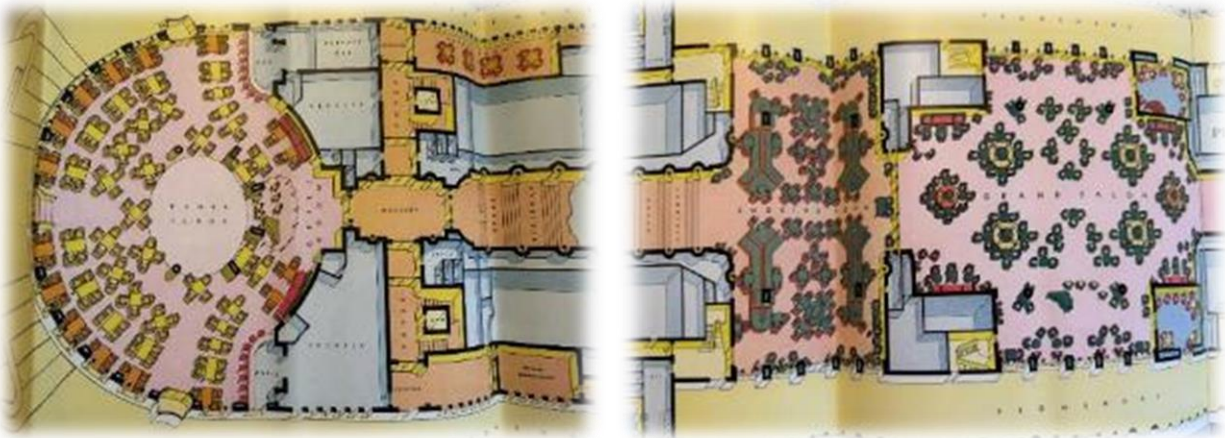


While outclassed by a new running mate the French Line (the SS FRANCE, entering service only weeks after the TITANIC foundered) issued an updated deck plan for their now-diminutive, yet popular 1899-entry, LA LOURRAINE. Her 1913 plan (*below*) issued the same year as VICTORIA LUISE saved a lot of paper in comparison. In addition to the expected detail, they added something new for 1st and 2nd class passengers to admire: color-coded cabins!

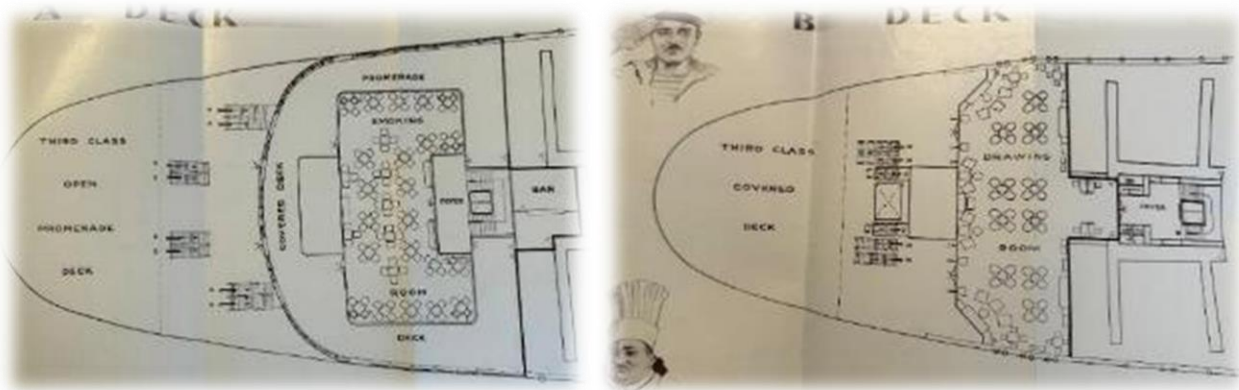


It was the 1930s that was the golden age of the ocean liner deck plan. With new state-sponsored giants and record breakers competing for the Blue Riband, it was tantamount for the lines to colorfully and as overtly as possible illustrate just how beautiful their new ships were. And while the longest, largest, and fastest always took the graphical forefront deck plan enhancement paid dividends too for some of the less remarkable vessels.

It was 1935 when the NORMANDIE arrived on the scene and while she was not the first French ship to appear in isometric fashion (the French termed it “from the Iso-deckplan System”) she was certainly the most glorious. Only First Class (and on later plans as Cabin Class) and Tourist Class plans were issued in the Iso-deckplan style. Take a look at the Iso-deckplan treatment for a few of NORMANDIE’s first class appointments: her 1st class Grill Room, gallery, and the Grand Stairway to her Smoking Room (*below*).



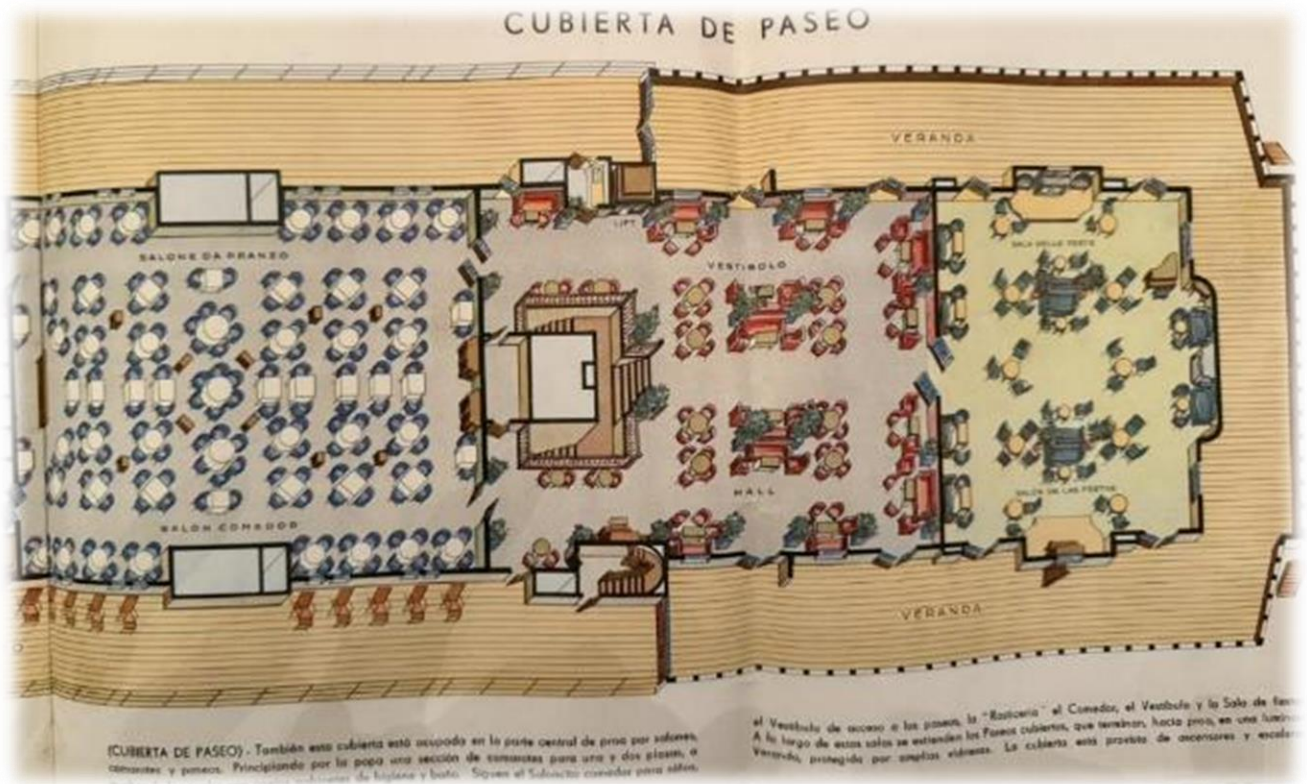
Third class on NORMANDIE was not only (apparently) less colorful, but as you’d suspect covered but a fraction of the space aboard. Here again a comparison of NORMANDIE’s 3rd class A & B deck public rooms that include space only for a smoking room and a drawing room amid a small patch of open area.



The NORMANDIE never reached the passenger numbers that the comparatively basic deck plans generated for the QUEEN MARY, but the French had made a public relation splash. (Note: While the large fold out “booklet” style Iso format dominated, the French also issued the full fold out Iso versions for other ships. There was even a black and white “tissue paper” Iso-deckplan fold out version that saved mailing costs).

With the recent merger of Cosulich, Lloyd Sabaudo and Navigazione Generale Italiana or “NGI” to Italia Flotte Riunite (or Italian Line), the Italians followed suit issuing even more dramatic versions of their fold-

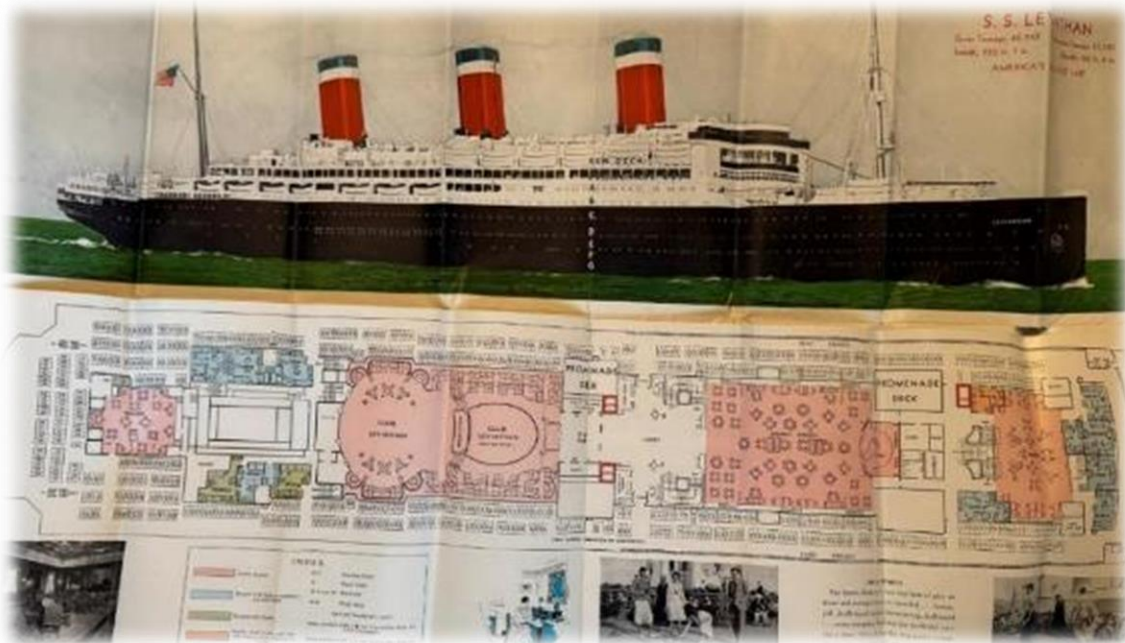
out isometric deck plan booklets. Lloyd Triestino joined the fray, issuing beautiful versions for their ships including the VICTORIA. I'm only aware of the single Italia version I own for the AUGUSTUS, but no doubt versions exist for REX, CONTE Di SAVOIA, SATURNIA, VULCANIA, and ROMA. Here's a taste of the AUGUSTUS fold out booklet format (*below*) issued for their Spanish-speaking market since AUGUSTUS maintained a South American schedule. Note the potted palms, doorways and ruffled couch covers!



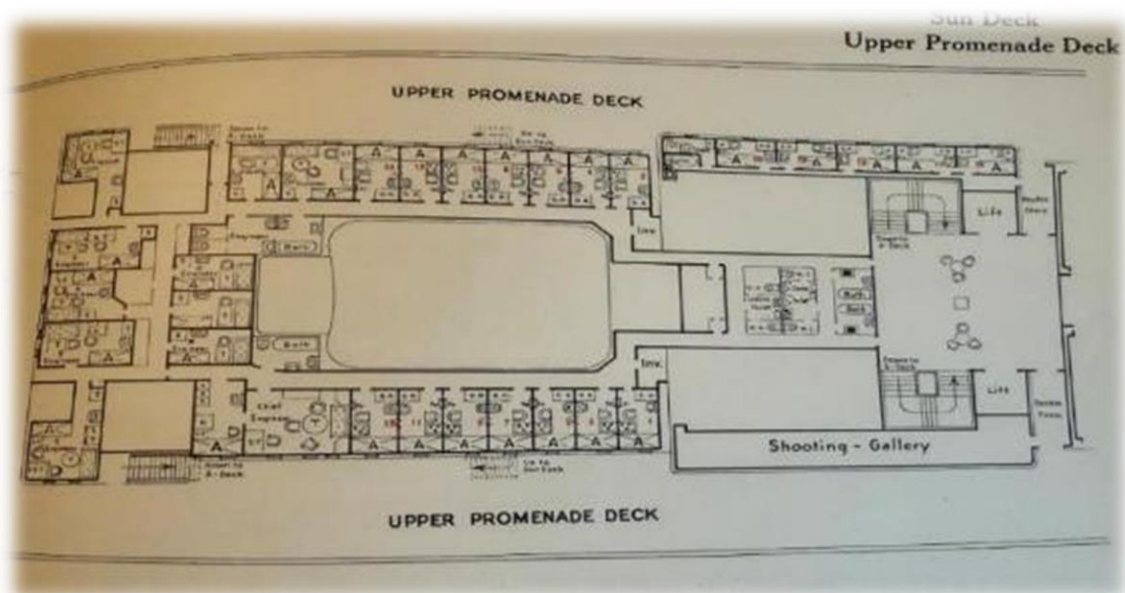
The AUGUSTUS isometric fold-out booklet even went so far as to include full isometric views of various first-class cabins including all cabin enhancements of rugs, table lights, bidets in the bathrooms, and again ruffled bedspreads, and pictures on the bulkheads.



The US Lines didn't follow the isometric crowd. Their May 1934 LEVIATHAN First Class plan made sure her presence was noted throughout the cabin selection process, with a large starboard view of the ship above the booklet style plan. Their plans (*below*) did include one accessory the others missed: they noted the number and location of all enclosed promenade deck chairs so the selection could be made along with the cabin.

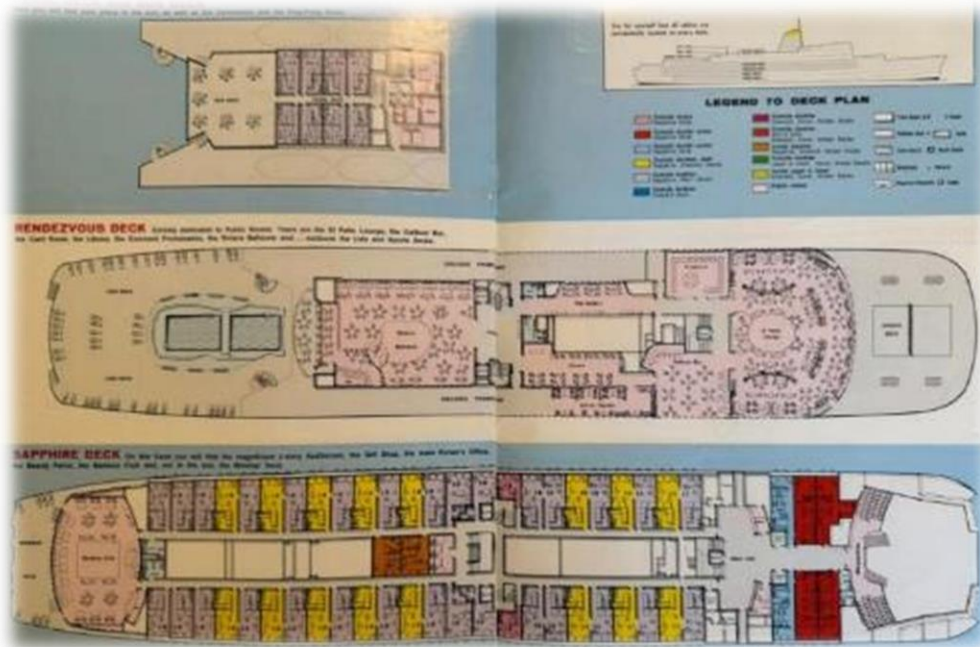


One of the more unusual onboard activities was for Hamburg America Line's record breaker, BREMEN. Their mid-1930s plan (*below*) includes her Upper Promenade Deck "Shooting Gallery," an obvious predecessor to skeet shooting that was popular until outlawed by the 1990s.



Later plans issued pre-war and post-war for American Export Lines included beautiful, very large and highly detailed isometric studies for their Four Aces and the CONSTITUTION and INDEPENDENCE with the same enhanced treatment Italia had done for their ships – potted palms, ruffled bedspreads, etc.

CGT plans following the close of WW2 for DE GRASSE, FLANDRE, ANTILLES and LIBERTE completely eliminated including public room and dining room seating. Interestingly, MICHELANGELO and RAFFAELLO plans in the 1960s did the same despite the usual detail included for cabin and deck illustration. During the '50s and '60s elaborate isometric-type plans seemed to have gone the way of the dodo. Then, surprisingly in the early 70s, Inces Lines VICTORIA recaptured some of the “glamour” isometrics (*below*) brought to the deck plan with a simple version bringing three-dimensional viewing again to their deck plans.



Seemingly, by all accounts that was the end of the “stylized” deck plan. Almost every plan issued post-1982 was of the simple, color-coded variety without any cabin, deck or passenger lounge detail. To my knowledge, there were two exceptions: Royal Viking Line continued providing details for their three sister ships. Costa Lines also provided a limited run of highly detailed plans for their containership converts to COSTA ALLEGRA and COSTA MARINA, but these were not widely available.

A short story to conclude. I had lent a variety of paper items to the fledgling US Merchant Marine Museum in Kings Point, NY including a small, detailed CONSTITUTION/INDEPENDENCE deck plan booklet. After a year or so, seeing the multitude of paper ephemera various US individuals and companies donated to the museum, I asked for my few contributions back. Alas, they had been lost. Some thirty years later a NY friend now living in Florida noted a familiar name on a deck plan offered for sale on Ebay. Back in the '60s, “playing travel agent,” my brother and I had written our names and Italian address on the front of the plan booklet – the CONSTITUTION had delivered us to Italy in 1966. Without my knowledge my friend purchased the plan – slightly torn, definitely marked-up – and surprised me with it. It included all of my mom’s markings in planning our Tourist crossing on the CONSTITUTION and it rejoined my collection. Don’t ever tell me Deck Plans can’t spur sentimentality!

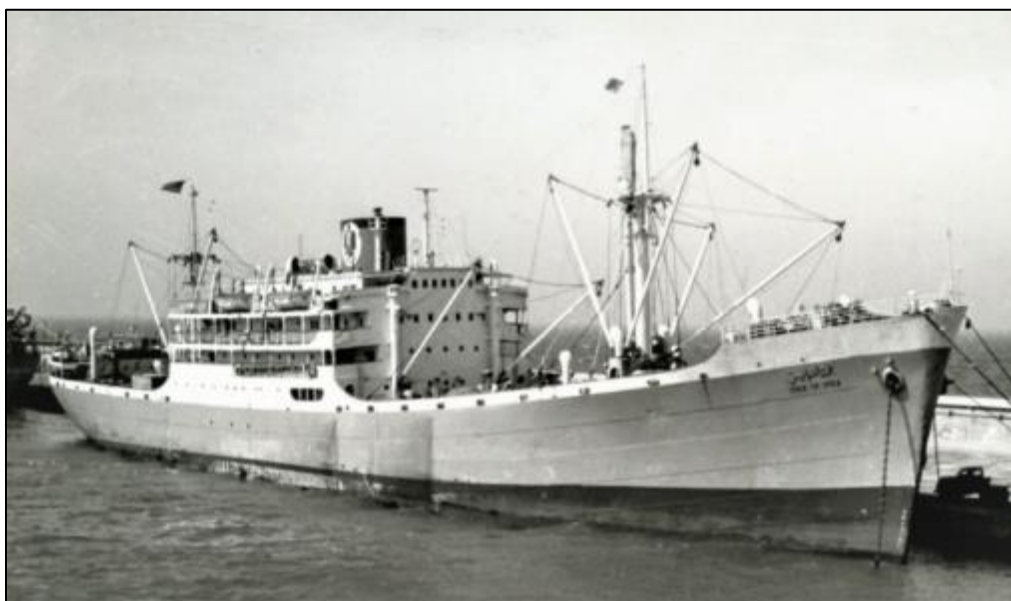
Note: I’m not under any illusion that I’ve included all the varieties of plans, nor the ships that were featured in some of the types of plans I’ve included in this report. My intent was to provide a fun look back and I hope you enjoyed reading through it.

(Images: Alan Zamchick Collection)

SHIPS IN PORT FLYING THE EGYPTIAN COLORS

By Bill Miller

Few would know of the United Arab Maritime Company and even less so of the Canada-Orient Line. Beginning in the late 1950s, they ran a passenger-cargo service across the North Atlantic. The general routing was from Alexandria and usually via Naples and Genoa to Montreal and then onward to Hamilton, Ontario. Several ships were used on irregular schedules including the 40-passenger STAR OF ASSUAN and the similar STAR OF SUEZ, which also had accommodation for 40 all-tourist class travelers. Very occasionally, these ships appeared, with little or no notice, in New York. They would berth over in Brooklyn and belonged to the so-called Alexandria Navigation Company.



Both ships were quite small: the STAR OF ASSUAN was listed at 5,464 tons and 398 feet in length; the STAR OF SUEZ (*left*) was slightly larger at 6,440 tons and 408 feet in length. The STAR OF ASSUAN (*below*) had been built as a traditional freighter carrying up to only 12 passengers and came from Scotland, from the Caledon Shipbuilding &

Engineering Company of Greenock. The STAR OF SUEZ was created by the Italians at Cantieri Riuniti dell'Adriatico at Trieste. Extended passenger quarters were fitted later. Each ship offered one deluxe suite with a private bathroom, two deluxe singles which shared a bathroom and double-berth cabins without private facilities as the remainder. There was a veranda-bar, smoking room and dining room. Each ship also had a small outdoor pool.

In June 1959, both ships began sailings to Canada (and sometimes into the Great Lakes as well) for other Egyptian shipowners, the exotically named Societe Generale pour la Navigation Company. But this soon changed, in 1961, to the Khedivial Mail Line and then quickly over to United Arab Maritime. An





Another member of this Egyptian group was the 40-berth PORT SAID.

offshoot based in Montreal traded as the Canada-Orient Line. In winter, when the St Lawrence was all but closed, the ships were sent on voyages to the Middle East, to south and east Africa, and around the Mediterranean.

The seasonal trans-Atlantic passenger and freight service was all rather short-lived, ending in 1963-64. Both ships were then reassigned to Alexandria-Mediterranean-Northern Europe-Baltic service. The passenger accommodation was no longer used, however.

By the late 1970s, the pair was all but retired. The author saw them, both idle and somewhat neglected, at anchor in Alexandria harbor in the summer of 1983. Soon afterward, the STAR OF ASSUAN and STAR OF SUEZ sailed off to the scrappers.

(Images: Bill Miller Collection)

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Regular Zoom meetings with speakers on maritime topics, local outings, group cruises, active website, The Porthole monthly newsletter, friends, and more.

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CURRENT MEMBERS PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIPS NOW FOR 2025!

<https://worldshipny.org>



SHIP'S LOG

“VIKING LINE: BEFORE AND BEYOND” BY CLIVE HARVEY

Recap by Marjorieann Matuszek

THE EARLY YEARS: The ships of Royal Viking Line, recognized for their stylish appointments, high levels of service and intriguing itineraries, became synonymous with luxury sea travel in the 1970's. To understand their origin as well as their success, Clive Harvey first took us back in time to the pre-70's operations of Bergen Steamship Company, one of three ship lines that partnered to form the Royal Viking Line.

Clive launched his program with an Eduard Edler painting (*below image*) of the 1904-built METEOR, a 3,613-ton, 220-passenger cruising yacht that Bergen Steamship Company or BDS (Det Bergenske

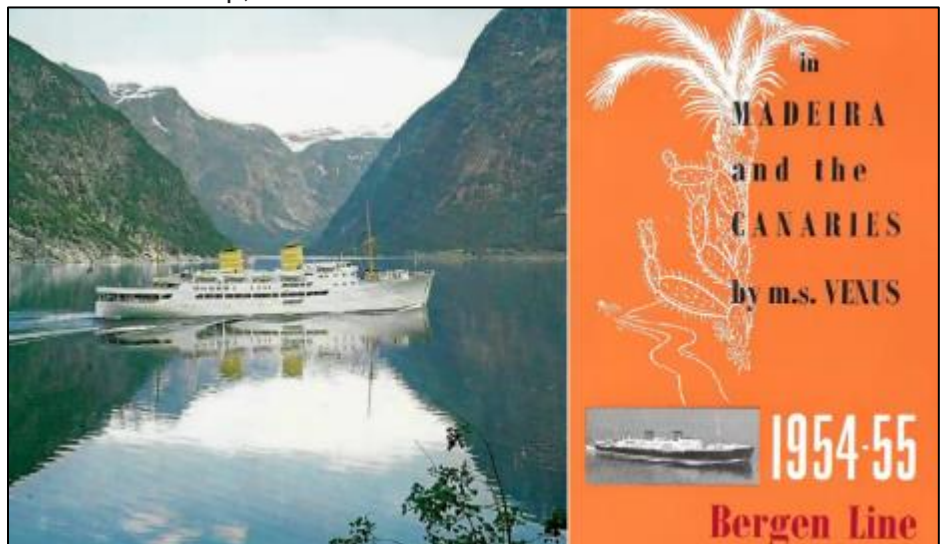


Dampskibsselskab) acquired from Hamburg America Line (HAPAG) in 1921 for thirty thousand dollars. Although the ship had “palatial accommodations,” BDS spent an amount equal to the purchase price to modernize the ship. The name METEOR was retained in keeping with the names of other ships in its fleet such as VENUS and JUPITER.

Based upon the popularity of METEOR, BDS ordered a twin-screwed diesel motor yacht for long-haul cruising. The 5,056-ton, 200-passenger vessel was built at the Ab Goetaverken yard (Gothenburg, Sweden) and named STELLA POLARIS. The ship cruised to far away destinations, offering passengers a high degree of luxury and comfort.

METEOR served as a hospital ship during World War II, but it was sunk in April 1944. STELLA POLARIS, which had been seized by the Germans in 1940, became a floating “hotel” for U-boat officers on leave. Following the War, BDS repossessed the ship, refurbished and modernized it and returned it to service. When she became too expensive to operate, the ship was sold to Sweden's Clipper Line in 1951. STELLA POLARIS sailed to ports in Europe and the Caribbean until 1969.

In the post-war years, BDS used the 1931-built, VENUS (*right*) for cruises to the Norwegian fjords and the Canary Islands, and also ferry service across the North Sea



during the summer. BDS spent nearly a million dollars to renovate the ship, which then sported handsome, mid-century modern interiors. In 1955, it took delivery of a new, single-stack, purpose-built cruise ship, again called METEOR, as a replacement for STELLA POLARIS. The ship sustained a fire in 1971 and was sold. BDS was approached about investing in a new venture by Det Nodernfjelske Dampskibsselskab (NFDS), a company with whom it co-ran Hurtigruten operations, and by A.F. Klaveness & Co., which had a long history of transporting cargo but was new to the passenger cruise industry.

THE CONSORTIUM: BDS was approached about investing in a new venture by Det Nodernfjelske Dampskibsselskab (NFDS), a company with whom it co-ran Hurtigruta operations, and by A.F. Klaveness & Co., which had a long history of transporting cargo but was new to the passenger cruise industry. In 1970, each of the three ship lines agreed to contribute one ship to the venture called Royal Viking Line. While the executive office was in Oslo, sales were spearheaded by Warren Titus from San Francisco. Each 21,800-ton ship was built at the Wartsila Shipyard in Helsinki. The majority of the interior design was executed by the Oslo-based firm Finn Nilsson in conjunction with architect F.S. Platou.

Bergen Line's 539-passenger ship ROYAL VIKING STAR (*below*) was launched on May 12, 1971, and delivered on June 26, 1972. Clive said the interiors of the Royal Viking Line ships were every bit as modern as they were on the exterior.



NFDS's ROYAL VIKING SKY was launched on May 25, 1972, and delivered on June 5, 1973. Finally, Klaveness's ROYAL VIKING SEA was delivered on November 16, 1973. She entered service on December 17, 1973.

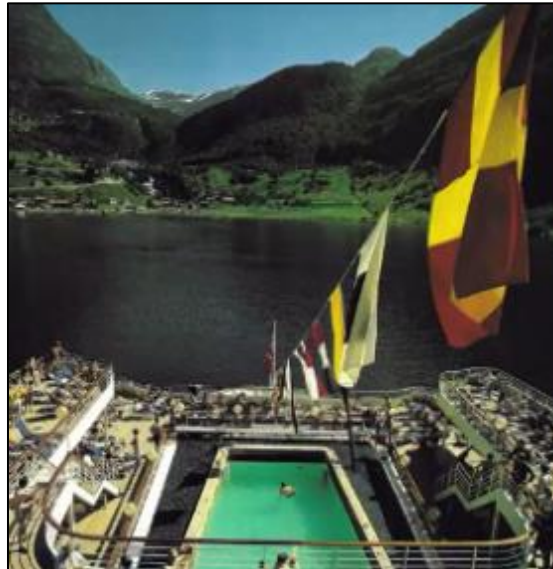
While the three ships initially struggled to become profitable, Royal Viking Line, under the guidance of CEO Torstein Hagen, established itself as a leader in the luxury cruise segment.

By 1975, Klaveness was experiencing financial difficulties with its other shipping operations and withdrew from the Royal Viking Line consortium. BDS and NFDS each took a share in ROYAL VIKING SEA. As Royal Viking Line became more successful, its directors contemplated stretching their ships. They also had discussions with the owners of Norwegian America Line about merging their respective fleets and possibly stretching two Norwegian America Line ships, renaming them "ROYAL VIKING SAGA" and "ROYAL VIKING VISTA," but the 1965-built SAGAFJORD was considered too old and ready to be

scrapped. Unhappy with the proposed disposal of SAGAFJORD and worried about a loss of exclusivity from the ship lengthening, Norwegian America Line's directors walked away from the proposed merger.



Clive said that compared to staterooms on today's cruise ships, the interiors of these standard-level cabins appeared "extremely restrained."



The three ships had tiered aft decks looking down to the outdoor pool.

Between August 30, 1981, and June 5, 1983, the three Royal Viking Line ships were lengthened from 177.7 meters to 205.37 meters, one at a time, at AG Weser shipyard in Bremerhaven.



Modern interiors of the ROYAL VIKING STAR from left: Stella Polaris Lounge, Master's Suite, and Bergen Lounge.

In 1984, Torstein Hagen arranged a \$240 million management buyout for the Royal Viking Line. Before the deal could be closed, however, BDS and NFDS decided to sell Royal Viking Line to Norwegian Caribbean Line, then a part of Kloster Group, headed by Knut Kloster. Kloster envisioned a new luxury ship for the Royal Viking Line, part of his Excelsior Project. The result of this project was the delivery in 1988 of a fourth ship in the Royal Viking fleet: ROYAL VIKING SUN (*below*).



Based upon the success of ROYAL VING SUN, Royal Viking Line acquired a super yacht, originally ordered by Seabourn Cruise Line. It entered service as ROYAL VIKING QUEEN in February 1992. Clive called the pair of ships a “mismatched duo.”



NO FUN IN THE SUN: Clive listed “a chain of mistakes” that drove the Kloster Group, owners of Royal Viking Line, into financial trouble. ROYAL VIKING SKY (1987) and ROYAL VIKING STAR (1988) were transferred to the Norwegian Caribbean Line and renamed SUNWARD and WESTWARD (*left*), respectively. Their registries were changed from Norwegian to Bahamian and they were deployed to the Caribbean. ROYAL VIKING SEA became part of Royal Cruise Line. She sailed as ROYAL ODYSSEY (1991-1997), NORWEGIAN

ODYSSEY (1997-2002), CROWN (2002-2004), and for Phoenix Reisen as ALBATROSS (2004-2021). Unsuitable to the mass-market, fun-in-the-sun concept of Norwegian Cruise Line, WESTWARD was also transferred to Royal Cruise Line and renamed STAR ODYSSEY.

Struggling with debt, the Kloster Group dissolved Royal Cruise line in 1996 and offered STAR ODYSSEY for sale. She was purchased by Fred.Olsen Cruise Lines, given a comprehensive refit and renamed BLACK WATCH. Clive shared photos of her tartan-themed interior (*right*). After a 2005 refit at Blohm+Voss, her interiors were much more subdued.



Like her sistership, SUNWARD was unsuited to NCL's operations. She spent twelve years in a variety of unsuccessful ventures before being sold to Birka Line of Sweden and renamed BIRKA QUEEN for short Baltic Sea cruises. In June 1993, she was placed on a three-year charter to Princess Cruises and sailed as GOLDEN PRINCESS (*below*). In 1997 Birka sold the ship to Star Cruises which renamed her SUPERSTAR CAPRICORN for Asian market cruises.



Between March and May 1988, the ship provided short casino cruises out of New York, but they were unsuccessful. Later in 1988, Star Cruises chartered the ship to the Hyundai Merchant Marine. Renamed HYUNDAI KEUMGANG, it sailed between North Korea and South Korea from November 1988 until June 2001. The ship was returned to Star Cruises where it became SUPERSTAR CAPRICORN, again sailing to ports in Southeast Asia between 2001 and 2004. Viajes Iberojet acquired the ship in 2004, renamed her GRAND LATINO and marketed Mediterranean cruises departing from Barcelona.

RECENT TIMES: In January 2005, GRAND LATINO, ex-ROYAL VIKING SKY, was purchased by Fred.Olsen Cruise Lines. Between October and November 2005, the ship's interiors were refurbished, and her main engines were replaced at the Blohm+Voss shipyard in Hamburg. Renamed BOUDICCA, the ship departed from Dover on her first cruise for Fred.Olsen on February 25, 2006.

In June 1994, the Kloster Group sold the ROYAL VIKING SUN and the Royal Viking brand to Cunard Line after the Royal Viking Line ceased operations. Seabourn acquired ROYAL VIKING QUEEN in 1996 and renamed it SEABOURN LEGEND. Following Carnival Corporation's acquisition of Cunard Line, the ROYAL VIKING SUN was transferred to Seabourn Cruise Line in 1999 and renamed SEABOURN SUN. Clive mentioned that the SEABOURN SUN, at close to 39,000 tons, was not a good fit in a fleet of yacht-

like ships, so her time at Seabourn was brief. In April 2002, SEABOURN SUN was transferred to Holland America Line and renamed PRINSENDAM.



Clive conjectured that Fred.Olsen had expressed interest in the ship but P&O pressured Carnival Corp. not to sell the ship to a competitor. PRINSENDAM (*above*) remained in the Holland America Line fleet for seventeen years until 2019 when it was sold to Phoenix Reisen. It underwent a major refit (which included new engines) at Blohm+Voss and was renamed AMERA (*below*).



The original trio of Royal Viking Line ships is now gone. Only AMERA, ex-ROYAL VIKING SUN, which emerged from a Polish shipyard with new engines and a technical upgrade at the end of 2023, remains as torch bearer of the luxury and style that once defined the Royal Viking Line. Or is it?

As Clive Harvey reminded us at the end of his informative program, VIKING STAR, the first in a fleet of thirteen (and counting) ocean vessels of Viking Ocean Cruises (headed by Torstein Hagen) was launched from Fincantieri's Marghera shipyard on June 23, 2024.

(Photos and Images: Clive Harvey and Clive Harvey Collection)

SHIP NEWS

Compiled by Pat Dacey

“MIAMI NICE”

Cunard recently announced that QUEEN ELIZABETH will undergo a scheduled refit in February 2025 before her deployment to North America in May and her series of voyages to Alaska. This will be followed by her introduction to the Caribbean from Miami beginning in October.

It is believed that the refit will take place in Singapore as QUEEN ELIZABETH arrives there on February 25th, following a voyage from Australia. QUEEN ELIZABETH then sails from Singapore to Hong Kong on March 14th beginning her Asian Itineraries until cruising to North American waters in May.



Rendering of the Commodore Club on board QUEEN ELIZABETH ahead of her 2025 refit. (Image: CUNARD)

With the addition of double sun beds in the Grills Terrace and a new “splash” of color in favorite locales like the Queens Room and the Commodore Club, Cunard is updating the classic ship focusing on her public spaces. The Grills Suites will also receive a refreshed design as part of the refit creating more stylish surroundings to complement other ship wide updates.



Rendering of the Queens Room on board QUEEN ELIZABETH ahead of her 2025 refit. (Image: CUNARD)

In addition, new regionally inspired menus will complement the dining experience as well as the addition of a Wellness Café, a popular venue introduced on QUEEN ANNE.

CARNIVAL WILL CELEBRATE 55TH BIRTHDAY IN 2027



A comparison of MARDI GRAS (1972) with MARDI GRAS (2020). *(Image: Carnival Cruise Line)*

Carnival Cruise Line will celebrate its 55th birthday in 2027 with special events on 11 cruises, featuring three ship meetups at sea, according to a press release from the company. During these specially planned “birthday” cruises, the number of ships involved in meetups starts with four for the first meetup on March 9th, three ships for the March 10th meetup and five ships for the March 13th meetup near Celebration Key.

Although each participating ship will be throwing its own party, these celebrations will be “funner” with the “Fun Ships” meetups.



(Image: Carnival Cruise Line)

Members may submit the following for consideration for publication in The Porthole: member photos with descriptions and dates taken, 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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