

Friday, October 25 - 6:00 PM

At the Community Church Assembly Room, 40 East 35th Street, Manhattan

## Ocean Travel from Charles Dickens' 1842 Transatlantic Crossing to Today

By Anthony Cooke

The PONY Branch will once again welcome London resident Anthony Cooke who will address how drastically, or in some cases not, ocean travel and life on board ship have changed over the years. He will begin with Charles Dickens' uncomfortable Atlantic crossing on Cunard's tiny *Britannia* in 1842, and include a description of a voyage on the White Star Line's *Majestic* made by a very grumpy passenger in 1891, among many other things. He then brings us right up to date with the modern ships and their balcony cabins, skating rinks and show biz entertainment. Members with delicate sensibilities should be warned - he does not shrink from dealing with sea sickness and sanitary arrangements. Come join us for an evening full of tales from the sea and ships by our noted overseas raconteur. Refreshments will reflect the clashing tastes of both sides of the Atlantic.



Third Class deck space on the forecastle of the Cunard Line's MAURETANIA (1939)

(Art Ferguson)

**NEXT EVENTS:** November 22: Sailing to the Sun: Cruising History and Folklore, by Bill Miller

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**THE PORTHOLE**, published by the Port of New York Branch, World Ship Society, welcomes original material for publication. Address to the editor, Bob Allen, at [oceanvoyag@aol.com](mailto:oceanvoyag@aol.com) or via the PONY mailing address.

## SHIP'S LOG

Our September program opened on a somber note. WSS-PONY Chairman Ted Scull spoke about the death of long-time member Mary Ellen Kelly on September 15, 2013. (Read his tribute on Page 3.) Ted then asked for a moment of silence.

Next, Vice-Chairman and Special Events Head David Hume, reminded members about the upcoming lunch and tour aboard the Norwegian Breakaway on Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. All reservations were due by October 1.

The speaker for the evening, PONY Secretary Greg Fitzgerald, was introduced by his mother, Carol. We learned that Greg's childhood interest in lighthouses (of which he's already seen at least 400) had morphed into a passion for ship travel by the time he was in high school. Greg's presentation, entitled "Northward: The Norwegian Coastal Journey on board Hurtigruten's *MS Lofoten*," took us on a scenic voyage he shared with Ted Scull from Bergen to Kirkenes via the North Cape.

Greg chose this trip for the opportunity to sail on "a classic ship," pass many lighthouses and geocache along the way. (Geocaching is a game of hiding and seeking treasure using GPS technology. You can stash a geocache anywhere in the world, pinpoint its location using GPS and then post its location online. Treasure hunters with GPS units can then try to locate the stash.)

### The Ship

Greg began his program with basic facts about the *MS Lofoten* (2621 GRT; 287' long) and a memorable photo of the *Queen Elizabeth 2* dwarfing the ship in Trondheimfjord. The tallest part of the ship would reach only Three Deck on the *QE2*!

Built in 1964 at Aker yards in Oslo and named after the Lofoten Islands just north of the Arctic Circle, it is the oldest ship in the Hurtigruten fleet. *MS Lofoten* has possibly logged more working hours (i.e., continuous engine use) ---264,000-285,000--than any other passenger/cargo ship afloat: a remarkable feat for a 49-year-old ship! The *Lofoten* can accommodate 340 passengers but has only 153 beds. Thus, many passengers make shorter, point-to-point trips. On Greg's and Ted's voyage, there were approximately 80 passengers, including 7 Americans.

Greg followed with a tour of the ship: his 70 square-foot stateroom (with bunks), the handsome, wood-paneled dining room, the lower-deck cafeteria/lounge (where most short trip voyagers spend their time), gift shop and upper deck observation lounge—"as quiet as a library and good for viewing sights past the cargo on the ship's bow." Next we saw the bridge (with an unusual location—ceiling--for starting the windshield-wipers) and the impressive engine room

### Experience

The *Lofoten*, like many of its sister Hurtigruten ships, is a working passenger/cargo ship. In some ports, such as Torvik, visits are approximately 15 minutes--just long enough to discharge cargo and passengers and taken on new ones. A ship-issued passenger card allows one to walk on to other Hurtigruten ships in port, time permitting. Passports are never shown.

Passenger safety drills are conducted in port terminals prior to embarkation. Passengers can walk onto the bridge wings at any time—even during difficult maneuvers—as Greg did.

Breakfast and lunch are served buffet-style. Herring lovers take note: the ship serves 9 varieties of herring for breakfast. There is no Internet service on the ship, so pack away the mobile devices unless you need them to photograph herring.

### Port sights and sounds

Greg's journey began in Bergen, Norway's second-largest city. Prior to boarding the ship he took a funicular for a panoramic photo of this city built into the hillsides, then strolled past shopping areas, fish markets and cafes along the old Hanseatic wood pier called "Bryggen" on his way to the dock. Greg noted that the *Lofoten* attained its full service speed of 15 knots as it left port—pretty impressive for a ship with one screw, a rudder and no thrusters!

*Lofoten* stopped at its first major daytime port along the route—Torvik—for about 15 minutes.

Alesund, gateway to the Geirangerfjord, followed. After fires decimated the city in 1904, it was rebuilt in the *Art Nouveau* style. Here, a tour entitled "Geiranger Panorama" afforded a view from the "Eagles' Nest" at the top of the fjord.

Next on the journey was Molde, a first point of crossing for Northbound and Southbound ships. Greg mentioned that Northbound and Southbound ships actually pass every 12 hours. During the day, Northbound ships give 3 long blasts of the whistle first, followed by 3 blasts from southbound ships, then 1 short blast each. At night, flashlights are used: 3 long flashes from the northbound ship, 3 from the southbound ship, followed by 1 one short flash from each ship. Greg visited the *Kong Harald* and *Nordkapp* while in port.

After leaving Sandnessjoen, it was time for an Arctic Circle crossing ceremony. One of *Lofoten's* officers, in the guise of Kong Neptune, visited the upper (outside) deck and doused with ice cubes the person to guess most closely the time of the crossing. Greg, a runner-up, was also "christened."

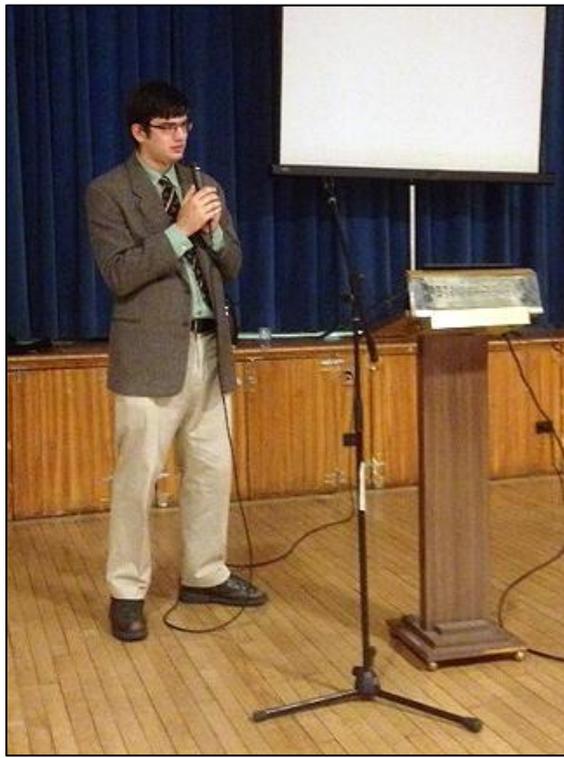
From Bodo, the first major port above the Arctic Circle and northern terminus of the Norwegian railroad system, the *Lofoten* made its way to 2 scenic places in its namesake islands: Stamsund and Svolvaer.

Tromso, Norway's 4<sup>th</sup> largest city above the Arctic Circle and the headquarters for Hurtigruten, was one of Greg's favorites. We saw its striking 4-story Public Library and Cathedral of the Arctic, which was built in 1965.

When the *Lofoten* stopped at Honningsvåg, the northernmost city in Norway, Greg managed a geocache hunt before signing the *Nordkapp* Log Book to show he had visited the North Cape. He felt the top of Europe must be vested at least once.

Greg disembarked in Kirkenes, the Norwegian city closest to the Russian border. Since he had a day's layover before his flight to Oslo and Iceland, Greg was able to photograph the *Lofoten* one last time as it headed south into the glistening waters of the Arctic Ocean.

For his deft and enthusiastic presentation, Greg will receive the book *Hurtigruten 120: The Complete Story*.



PONY Board Member and Branch Secretary Greg Fitzgerald giving his presentation at the September membership program. (David Hume)

### **REMEMBERING MARY ELLEN KELLY**

A Tribute Delivered at the Port of New York Branch Meeting on September 27, 2013

By Theodore W. Scull

As many of you will already know, long-time member Mary Ellen Kelly died on Sunday afternoon, September 15<sup>th</sup> at the age of 65 in the hospice wing of Beth Israel where she spent her last four days. The principal cause was chronic lung disease brought on by being near the World Trade on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 and subsequent volunteer work down there.

A week ago Tuesday evening, a wake was held at a funeral parlor on East 28<sup>th</sup> Street and a traditional Funeral Mass on Wednesday at 10 A.M. at the Church of Our Savior, 59 Park Avenue at 39<sup>th</sup> Street. As an aside, I used to visit a cousin who lived on the same block, and I watched the construction of the neo-Romanesque church in the 1950s. It must be one of the last architecturally traditional churches built in the city. Many of the PONY branch members attending wore QE2 pins, ties and scarves in memory of her fondness for and countless crossings in the ship.

As Mary Ellen became increasingly ill, several of her Gilbert and Sullivan Society friends (especially Harry Forbes) and World Ship Society friends (Dick Faber, David Hume, Carol Miles, Sheila Browne and my wife Suellyn) helped her as best we could as, sadly, her brother and sister had little contact with her.

Mary Ellen is buried next to her mother at a cemetery in Short Hills, New Jersey where she grew up.

Mary Ellen spent most of her working life as an editor, and in fact she edited my first book. She had a passion for reading as some of us found out when we began moving out the massive book collection. She was an active member of the Gilbert & Sullivan Society and loved American musicals, classic films, the Cunard liner *Queen Elizabeth 2*, and the Jersey Shore (though not the way it is depicted in the TV series). Her family owned a house on Tuttle Ave, Spring Lake, and a coastal town informally known as the Irish Riviera. With a name like Kelly, the family fit right in.

Until a few months ago, and before Mary Ellen became legally blind, she was a regular poster on Facebook, enthusiastically sharing her passions with her friends. Here is a fine example where social media can be of great importance to those shut indoors. Her postings were many and lots of fun.

Perhaps most poignantly, her Roman Catholic faith played a very strong role throughout her life, and especially at the end.

Let's have a moment of silence as we remember our good friend - Mary Ellen Kelly.

## ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES: January, 2012 – October, 2013

<b>SHIP</b>	<b>FROM</b>	<b>TO</b>	<b>VOYAGE</b>	<b>PASSENGER(S)</b>	<b>DATE</b>
ROYAL PRINCESS	Southampton	Barcelona	Spain & Portugal	Dorothy Lippincott	06/13
N BREAKAWAY	New York	New York	Bermuda – WSS PONY	Dorothy Lippincott	09/13
AMSTERDAM	Vancouver	Vancouver	Alaska Inside Passage	Charles & Marjorie Zuckerman	08/13
GRAND MARINER	Boston	New York	New England & Hudson River	Ted Scull	09/13
CARNIVAL LEGEND	Dover	Dover	Norway & English Channel	Mary & Larry Levine	09/13

### MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Princess Cruises' SAPPHIRE PRINCESS passing Admiralty Island, Alaska, June 11, 2103.

(Rob O'Brien)

### TIME TO RENEW

The Membership Renewal Form for 2014 is included with this month's Porthole. Please return it no later than December 1, 2013. Thanks you for your continued support of the PONY World Ship Society!

### YOUR DAILY PROGRAMME

**SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM** [www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org](http://www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org) or 917-492-3379. In light of unresolvable financial challenges, South Street Seaport Museum's brief merger with The Museum of the City of New York has come to an end. While the galleries at 12 Fulton Street (Schermershorn Row) remain closed due to damage from Hurricane Sandy, Bowne Printers, the Museum's re-creation of a working 19th century print shop at 209 Water Street, is open every day, 11 am to 7 pm. A variety of hand-printed cards and other items are available at the adjacent Bowne & Co. Stationers at 211 Water Street, with all proceeds benefiting the Museum. Volunteers are also needed to help restore the historic ships. Contact the Museum for additional information.

**VANCOUVER WSS & VANCOUVER MARITIME MUSEUM** [www.worldshipsocietyvan.ca](http://www.worldshipsocietyvan.ca) for information or if you visit, contact Glenn Smith: 604-684-1240, email [glenn.smith@worldshipsocietyvan.ca](mailto:glenn.smith@worldshipsocietyvan.ca). **NOVEMBER MEETING – Wednesday, November 13.** Captain Stephen Brown, President of the Chamber of Shipping, will give a presentation on tanker traffic in B.C. with a general overview of shipping and shipping issues of concern to the general populace. **DECEMBER MEETING – Wednesday, December 11.** Annual General Meeting, Christmas Social, plus members' presentations. Meetings are held at the Vancouver Maritime Museum at 1905 Ogden Avenue (Kitsilano Point).

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

**THE NATIONAL LIBERTY SHIP MEMORIAL, INC.** [www.ssjeremiahobrien.org](http://www.ssjeremiahobrien.org) or [liberty@ssjeremiahobrien.org](mailto:liberty@ssjeremiahobrien.org) or 415-544-0100. 1275 Columbus Avenue, Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94133-1315. See the SS JEREMIAH O'BRIEN at Pier 45 at Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco, CA, or join one of the day cruises under the Golden Gate Bridge and around San Francisco Bay. 2013 sailing dates are: October 12 – San Francisco Fleet Week Cruise and Parade of Ships; October 13 – San Francisco Fleet Week Cruise. Contact the museum for prices, sailing time and tickets.

**NOBLE MARITIME COLLECTION**, [www.noblemaritime.org](http://www.noblemaritime.org), or 718-447-6490. 1000 Richmond Terrace, Building D, Staten Island, NY. The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual John A. Noble Art Auction will be held on Friday, November 15 at 6:30 PM. Admission is \$75, or \$65 for members. The free preview will be on Thursday, October 17 from 6 until 8 PM

### **NEW YORK HARBOR CRUISES**

**NEW YORK WATER TAXI**, [www.nywatertaxi.com](http://www.nywatertaxi.com) or 866-989-2542. Harbor cruises departing from both South Street Seaport Pier 17 and Pier 84 at West 44<sup>th</sup> Street. Hop on – hop off service throughout New York Harbor is offered as well. Contact via website or telephone for departure times and prices.

**CIRCLE LINE DOWNTOWN**, [www.circlelinedowntown.com](http://www.circlelinedowntown.com) or 866-989-2542. Harbor cruises on the ZEPHYR from April to December, and aboard New York Water Taxi from January to March, departing from Pier 17, South Street Seaport. Contact via website or telephone for departure times and prices.

**CIRCLE LINE**, [www.circleline42.com](http://www.circleline42.com) or 877-731-0064. Circle Manhattan and other harbor cruises, departing from pier 84 at West 44<sup>th</sup> Street. Contact via website or telephone for departure times and prices.

**NEW YORK WATERWAY**, [www.nywaterway.com](http://www.nywaterway.com) or 800-533-3779. Trans-Hudson ferry service and special-event cruises. Contact via website or telephone for departure times and prices.

### **SHIP'S MAIL**

Stephen Schoeman faults the Cunard Line for re-creating the “Golden Age” of ocean liner travel in QUEEN MARY 2 and its other ships (Porthole, June 2013). He feels it is an injustice to the millions of steerage passengers who did not enjoy the luxuries available to the wealthy and powerful in First Class. The immigrants below decks were not expecting a luxurious travel experience but were seeking a new life in America. In the context of the times they lived in, their food and accommodations were probably adequate for those in their social and economic class. Cunard is engaged in a highly competitive business and has a large and loyal following that obviously enjoys the unique experience they get on Cunard ships. There is no reason for anyone to feel guilty about events that occurred before they were born.

George Rubin  
Bronx, NY 10475

### **SHIP'S LIBRARY**

#### **FAVORITE BRITISH LINERS by Anthony Cooke**



The dust jacket of Favorite British Liners features a striking Kenneth Shoesmith image of Royal Mail Lines ASTURIAS.

(Carmania Press)

Our PONY WSS guest lecturer this month is also the author of a superb new book, **Favourite British Liners**. This book, published by the author's Carmania Press, is a nostalgic look at eighteen British-built and owned liners from the period 1914 to 1995. Represented in the book are shipping lines as diverse as White Star Line and Bank Line, and ships as well-known as QUEEN ELIZABETH 2 and as obscure as ABA, the first British motor ship. Mr. Cooke has made the book particularly interesting in many ways. The collection of ships, as the title informs us, includes many of his personal favorites. He tells the story of each ship in great detail, explaining not only why the ship is a favorite, but why it is important in the history of passenger shipping. The case for each liner is made not only with beautifully written and easily readable text, but with an extremely compelling series of illustrations. Exterior images include excellent black and white and color photos, postcard, painting and poster renderings, sectional views, and spectacularly colorful brochure covers. There is a wealth of remarkable interior views of these liners as well, including beautiful color photos and renderings, in addition to crisp black and white photos. Two highlights among many include a clever color diagram illustrating the design intent of CANBERRA's innovative court cabins, and a beautiful color detail of the MAURETANIA 2's First Class Dining Room map of the North Atlantic. A leading figure in the ocean liner firmament, Mr. Cooke was able to gain access to some of the world's most interesting collections from which to choose images for his book. He credits five author/collectors – Ambrose Greenway, Clive Harvey, Peter Knego, Bruce Peter and Paolo Piccione – as well many other artists and photographers including Stephen Card and Luis Miguel Correia. The lovely design of the book is by Mr. Cooke's frequent collaborator Maurizio Eliseo, himself a collector, photographer and contributor to the book. This book is a must-have for any serious student of liner history, or anyone who desires a book brimming with spectacular liner photos and their fascinating stories. One can only hope that Mr. Cooke will follow this volume with Favorite Italian Liners, Favorite French Liners, Favorite American Liners, etc.



Among Anthony Cooke's favourite British liners is P&O Line's great CANBERRA of 1961.

(Bob Allen Collection)

### SHIP NEWS

Ship News will return in the November issue of The Porthole

### THINGS WE LEARNED ABOUT PRINCESS ON OUR RECENT CRUISE

by Paul Immerman and Ellen Meshnick

Our recent 7-night cruise on the Caribbean Princess to New England and Canada is the trip that almost didn't happen. Last October, we cancelled the WSS group trip, a 4-night cruise to Bermuda, on Caribbean Princess because we didn't want to sail as Hurricane Sandy was bearing down on New York. We had Princess insurance so we got a 75% credit. But then Princess stopped offering 4-night cruises out of New York. Fellow WSS member Dave Hume came to the rescue by informing us of two 7-nighters that cost the same as the cancelled 4-night cruise!

You might say we had a "ship" on our shoulder as we embarked. Last year we asked Princess for a full refund because we felt that sailing into Hurricane Sandy was reckless and we shouldn't be charged for their poor judgment. They informed us that they felt otherwise with about the same degree of diplomacy as the Soviets used when they invaded Czechoslovakia. So for this cruise we purchased 100% insurance coverage from an outside provider.

Not the best introduction to a line, but we were quickly won over by the excellent service and friendly attitude of the crew. In the Lido, for example, within a minute or two of sitting down, a waiter asked for our drink orders and quickly brought coffee, tea, water and orange juice for breakfast. Many of the service staff profiled in the daily program had started in low-level jobs and worked their way up. The possibility of promotion apparently gives them a strong incentive to go the extra mile for passengers.

There were some lapses, as you might expect on a 114,000 ton ship that carries 3,100 passengers. For example, there was a 35-minute wait for tenders to and from Newport. Our tender was rolling as we boarded and Ellen fell into the laps of three crew members. Familiarity bred conversation and we learned that crew members are trained to look passengers in the eye, smile and say hello. One crewman told us he would never sail on Costa. "Because of the Costa Concordia disaster?" we asked "No," he said, "because Costa does not have a crew bar!"

**Dining:** The Caribbean Princess has three main dining rooms, a Lido buffet and two extra-tariff restaurants. Two of the dining rooms, located midships, offered *Anytime Dining* - just show up during dining hours, no reservations required. The third dining room, at the stern, offered traditional fixed seatings. We opted for the former. We usually were seated alone because we arrived after 8pm when it was quiet (they close at 9:30pm) but when we got there earlier, we shared a table and were amazed that there were so few New Yorkers. It speaks well of Princess that people flew in from all over the country (and even Canada) just to take the cruise. We also decided that most of the passengers were experienced cruisers because when one of the comedians cracked jokes about the demographics of other cruise lines, the theater roared with laughter. (We won't repeat any of them here, but they were funny.)

The food was very well-prepared but the menus lacked the healthy choices available on other cruise lines. Ellen told one of the white-clad supervisors in the dining room that Cunard offers heart-healthy choices and he became defensive, replying, "This is a different line and we do things differently." Still, standard dishes such as chicken breast, salmon and medallions of beef were "always available."

We experienced another example of Princess' superior service at the Lido one afternoon after a day of sightseeing. There were no healthy entrees, so Ellen complained to the servers behind the counter (that day's entrees were veal stew and fried chicken wings). They asked what we wanted and quickly grilled some chicken breasts for us. We had never experienced anything like this level of service before, even on Cunard or Azamara.

We wanted to review the Crown Grill, one of two extra-tariff restaurants, but, as Groucho Marx would have said "We left in a huff!" We showed up for our reservation exactly on time. The maître'd was on the phone so we waited a few minutes. We were then seated in a comfortable banquet in the dark-paneled room. A busboy provided water as we perused our menus. 10 minutes later, as we were waiting for someone to take our order, a young couple dressed in jeans and T-shirts arrived and a waiter ignored us and took their order instead. By this time, veal wasn't the only thing stewing, so we got up and left and went to one of dining rooms. There, as usual, we were greeted with a warm welcome and received quick, friendly service. (There were so many staff members in the dining rooms – could it be that the Crown Grill is understaffed or was it almost empty because word of their service had gotten around.)

Afternoon tea was offered in one of the dining rooms at shared dinner tables without music, so it was like any other meal. Quite a contrast to the QM2 where tea was a grand affair in the Queens Room complete with a string quartet. Once was enough.

The dress code for dinner was honored more in the breach than in the observance. On both of the two formal nights hardly any of the men wore tuxedos. In fact, a man at our table wore a jacket over a polo shirt. On the country club casual nights, the men wore long-sleeved shirts or polos but hardly anyone wore so much as a blazer.

**Accommodations:** Our cabin was toward the stern but any vibration from the propellers was absent. It had an open closet (no door) running across the cabin as you entered. We liked this layout because there was no closet door to take up space or bang shut, and light from the bathroom did not shine into the sleeping area. There was a lifeboat outside our window and one afternoon, in port, we were treated to the sight of a crewman performing some sort of maintenance, sitting on top of the lifeboat.

**Gym:** Despite tiny lockers, only two showers and a cramped free weight area (one passenger and Paul joked that some of the cabins must be larger than the free weight area) this gym had a lot of open space. On port days the gym was never crowded. On the sea day, more people showed up but most did not stay long and there were always aerobic machines (bicycles, treadmills, etc.) available.

**Disembarkation:** As experienced cruisers know, disembarkation is an art. Passengers on Princess have the option of carrying all their luggage and walking off the ship, but this requires a very early departure. We opted for the more traditional routine and left our heavy luggage out the night before. At this point things got confusing. The front desk told us to vacate the cabin by 8 am and the debarkation sheet said the Lido would be open for breakfast until 8:30 am. In fact, we didn't have to be out of the cabin until 8:30 am and the Lido stayed open until 9:00 am.

According to our color-coded luggage tags, we were to debark at 10:30 am, so we found lounge chairs near the pool and read and napped until we reached the worst moment in any cruise, the time to go ashore.

Overall, we give Princess a definite thumbs up and are looking forward to our next cruise.



**m.s. VICTORIA (ex-DUNNATOR CASTLE)**

(Bob Allen Collection)

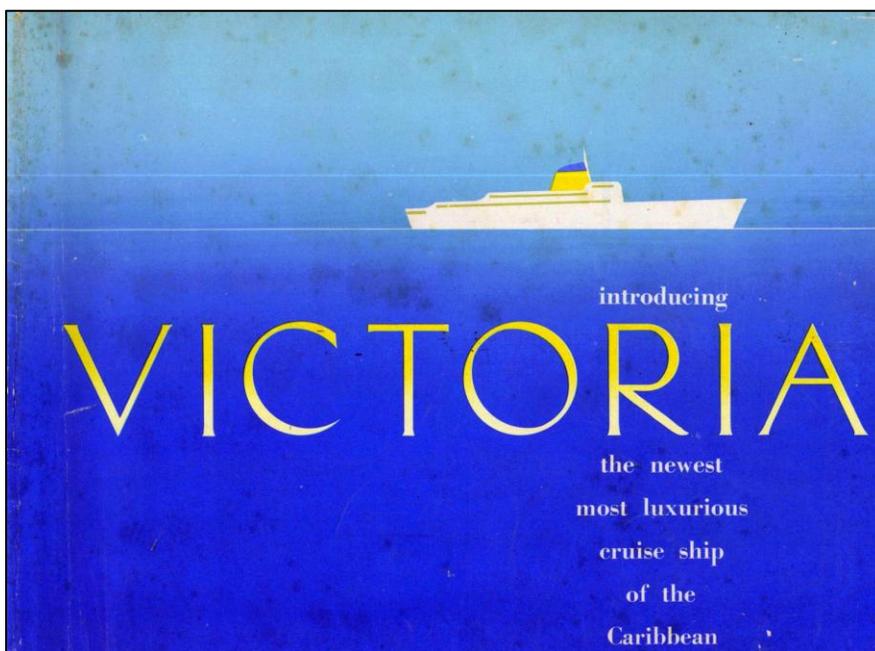
Originally built as a modest addition to Union-Castle Line's around Africa service, DUNNATOR CASTLE sailed on her maiden voyage from London on July 2, 1936, just five weeks after the first voyage of the QUEEN MARY. It was an era when headlines were grabbed by giant luxury liners like the QUEEN MARY, and her 1930's contemporaries such as REX, CONTE DI SAVOIA, NORMANDIE and NIEUW AMSTERDAM. However, in pre-jetliner days, many unremarkable ships like DUNNATOR CASTLE provided regularly scheduled passenger and cargo services to remote destinations. Built in Northern Ireland at Harland & Wolff, DUNNATOR CASTLE and her sister DUNVEGAN CASTLE (sunk early in World War II of Ireland) carried significant amounts of cargo, along with 508 passengers in two classes. Their typical routing was east through the Mediterranean to the Suez Canal, then south along Africa's east coast before rounding the Cape of Good Hope and heading north along the west African coast for London. After the outbreak of hostilities in 1939, DUNNATOR CASTLE was first used as an armed merchant cruiser, then as a troopship. She finally returned to peacetime voyages in 1949, and continued in service for Union-Castle for nine more years

Following the decline of passenger and cargo services in the late 1950's, and the advent of newer and more economical Union-Castle vessels, the DUNNATOR CASTLE was sold in 1958. The buyer was Inces Steamship Company Ltd., New York operating under the name Inces Nassau Line, and flying the Liberian Flag. Inces was founded in the early 1950's as a transatlantic line, poised to cash in on the post-war travel boom, but soon found a lucrative niche in cruising from New York to Nassau with the s.s.NASSAU. Originally P&O's 1923-built MONGOLIA, NASSAU was one of the few ships afloat in the 1950's that was dedicated to cruise service, and Inces wished to repeat her success with a larger vessel, this time designed for longer two-week luxury voyages. They sent their newly acquired vessel to the Wilton-Fijenoord Shipyards in Rotterdam, where plans called for the 22-year old DUNNATOR CASTLE to be entirely rebuilt. She was stripped down to a bare hull, then reconstructed with new passenger and crew accommodations; even her engines were removed, replace by new Fiat Diesels. Her exterior, a typical Union-Castle profile consisting of a single low funnel, twin masts, cargo booms, and a protruding cruiser stern, was drastically transformed. A sharply raked bow and receding cruiser stern were added, while a tall angled funnel, painted sunshine yellow with a royal blue cap crowned the sleek new profile. Most unusual was the tall blue-painted mast, attached to the front of the funnel; a shorter white mast just forward carried radar equipment. An all-white paint scheme replaced the traditional Union-Castle lavender hull with white upper works. Once completed in December 1959, she was virtually a new ship, christened VICTORIA: her look was fresh and sleek, with an elegant simplicity.

In order to attract a following in the young but growing post-war cruise market, Inces envisioned VICTORIA as a true luxury ship, and gave her a decidedly Italian flair. Her interior architect was Gustavo Pulitzer Finali, famed for his widely acclaimed designs for Italia, Costa and Lloyd Triestino liners, among others. Finali was also responsible for the liner's exterior profile and funnel. VICTORIA's main public deck (Rendezvous) began with a forward-facing observation lounge, actually designed for viewing. The rattan-filled El Patio Lounge had a slightly raised perimeter, with alcoves separated by bamboo screens on the port and starboard sides. Full height windows afforded sweeping ocean views over the bow and on both sides of the room. Just aft were the Galleon Bar and Card Room, both with full height windows. Next came the Library and Gallery / Writing Room on either side of the funnel casing, both overlooking open promenade decks. The aft-most public room was the Riviera Ballroom, paneled in light wood, with a raised central deck head and a gently sloping fully glazed aft bulkhead. At the aft end of Rendezvous Deck was the Lido, complete with twin pools separated by a wood bow-shaped bridge. Twin spiral staircases curved around kingposts, giving access to a full wrap-around Boat Deck above. Other public rooms were the Bamboo Club located at the fantail, with windows on three sides, and a lofty Theatre / Auditorium. The beautifully veneered Roman Restaurant featured a double-height barrel-vaulted ceiling and a stunning Emanuele Luzzati sculpture rising two decks at the forward bulkhead.

VICTORIA's maiden voyage on December 14, 1959 came just three months after the triumphant debut of ROTTERDAM (V). As with DUNNATOR CASTLE, VICTORIA's early career was somewhat overshadowed by a series of "Ships of State" that arrived in the early and mid-1960's. In addition to the ROTTERDAM, LEONARDO DA VINCI, ORIANA, CANBERRA, FRANCE, SHALOM, MICHELANGELO, and RAFFAELLO all grabbed the headlines and magazine covers. However, the VICTORIA earned a superb reputation as one of the world's most luxurious cruise ships, and was one of just a handful dedicated to year-round cruising. She was so successful that Inces considered rebuilding the NASSAU in the same fashion and hired the Finali studio to prepare preliminary plans in 1960, but the renovation did not materialize. The NASSAU was sold in 1961, and Inces went back to being a single-ship operation. In 1964, Inces attracted a major investor in the Clipper Line of Sweden in 1964, which purchase the company, but continued the Inces Line name and the VICTORIA's enormously popular New York-based cruising program. Real competition for VICTORIA emerged in the following year with the debut of Home Line's legendary OCEANIC in the spring of 1965. Like VICTORIA, OCEANIC was an all-First Class vessel, with Italian-designed interiors and Italian crew, and instantly developed a loyal following in the New York cruise market. However, OCEANIC specialized in shorter 7-day cruises, and could carry as many as 1,600 passengers, while VICTORIA maintained her reputation as a more intimate and luxurious choice. In addition, VICTORIA offered her clientele long European cruises during spring, summer and fall, as well as 12 to 18-day Caribbean Cruises.

The fuel crisis of 1973 marked the beginning of the end for the Inces Line. They entered a short-lived joint marketing agreement with the French Line in 1974, but the economics of the single-ship operation were just not acceptable, and Inces filed for bankruptcy in 1975. VICTORIA was laid up only briefly, and was purchased by the Chandris group for Greek Islands and general European cruising in later in 1975. Chandris had purchase another ex-Union Castle liner, KENYA CASTLE in 1967, and converted her to the transatlantic liner / cruise ship AMERIKANIS of 1968. Clearly, they appreciated the quality of these small, Harland & Wolff-built liners. Chandris operated VICTORIA (soon renamed THE VICTORIA) successfully for seventeen years, but in the budget rather than the luxury market. In 1993, the aging but still popular liner was sold to Louis Cruise Line of Cyprus and was renamed PRINCESA VICTORIA, and continued cruising the Eastern Mediterranean until her final season in 2002. When she reached retirement at the age of 66, she was the oldest deep-sea passenger liner still in active service. In 2004, she was towed from lay-up at Eleusis Bay, Greece, to Alang, India for demolition. The VICTORIA, ex-DUNNATOR CASTLE, has risen from unassuming beginnings to become a most desirable and luxurious cruise ship, and ultimately the senior member of the world's passenger fleet.

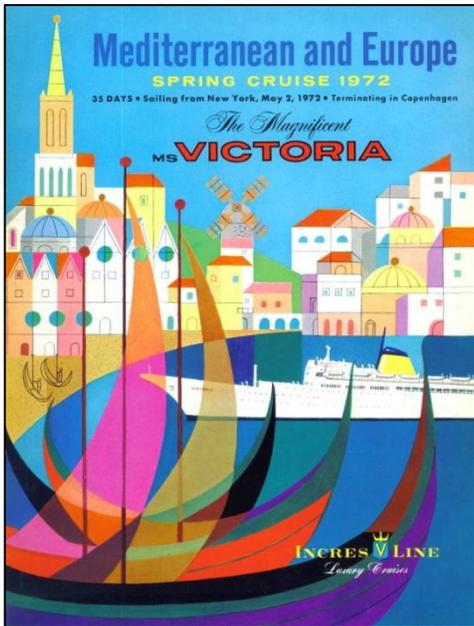


Inaugural brochure for VICTORIA, "the newest most luxurious cruise ship of the Caribbean."

(Bob Allen Collection)



VICTORIA'S spacious Lido Deck. Note the twin pools separated by a graceful bow-shaped bridge, and the spiral staircases. The glass bulkhead beyond the pools allowed panoramic views of the sea and sky from the Riviera Ballroom.



One cruise, one brochure: luxury, even in the printing.



VICTORIA's El Patio Lounge, designed for viewing tropical seas. (Bob Allen Collection)

**Owner:** Inces Steamship Co, Ltd., New York, USA  
**Builder:** Harland & Wolff, Belfast, Northern Ireland  
**Rebuilder:** Wilton-Fijenoord Shipyards, Rotterdam, Holland  
**Route:** Caribbean and European cruising  
**Service speed:** 18 knots  
**Pass. capacity:** 600 First Class

**Dimensions:** 573' x 72'  
**Gross Tonnage:** 14,917  
**Maiden Voyage (D. CASTLE):** July 2, 1936  
**Maiden Voyage (VICTORIA):** Dec. 14, 1959  
**Last Voyage:** Fall, 2002  
**Demise** Scrapped at Alang, India, 2004

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