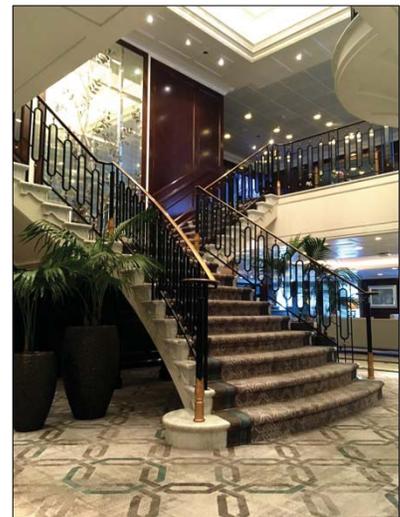




WORLD SHIP SOCIETY PORT OF NEW YORK BRANCH CRUISES TO BERMUDA!

Thirty-nine World Ship Society PONY Branch members and friends cruised to Bermuda on Oceania's INSIGNIA, August 18-25, 2019. A full recap and review of the cruise will appear in the September issue of The Porthole.



Clockwise from top left: INSIGNIA docked at St. George, Bermuda; CELEBRITY SUMMIT and NORWEGIAN ESCAPE docked at King's Wharf, Bermuda; INSIGNIA's elegant main entrance hall stair; WSS PONY Branch members and friends enjoy dinner in the INSIGNIA's dining room, below a newly installed chandelier of glass teardrops.

NEXT EVENTS: Membership meeting: Friday, September 27 – "The Sandy Hook Pilots: Serving the Port of New York and New Jersey Since 1694," by Captain William A. Speiser, Jr., Sandy Hook Pilot. Sunday, September 22 - Luncheon on the CARNIVAL SUNRISE; Friday, October 4 - Royal Tea on the QUEEN MARY 2.

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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 or via the PONY mailing address.

MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



QUEEN ELIZABETH departing New York on July 24, 2019.

(Tee Adams)

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Please send details of your summer cruise travel to The Porthole for the Arrivals and Departures column!

A SUMMER AFTERNOON AFLOAT

By Marge Dovman

There's nothing like a harbor cruise, with the added attraction of the sailing of a great cruise ship, to remedy a hot summer's day. An enticing invitation to such an event on July 24 lured 15 or so members and guests to an informal gathering on the 400-passenger DESTINY of the colorfully named North River Lobster Company.

The boat's graceful lines hinted at some kind of interesting past, but aside from that passenger estimate, no further information was available. The three decks provided a variety of accommodations – open to the sun and sky or sheltered from them by the deck above, or the great air-conditioned interiors (the latter was a welcome refuge from the hot sun). We could install ourselves at tables in any of the above locations, or wander about; eat and drink or not. Our group members did all of the above. No comments regarding the food and drink were heard, except for a negative assessment of the iced tea. The \$10 admission fee, payable only by credit card, food and drink not included, entitled the purchaser not only to the cruise, but to subsequent ones and the time in between.

The object of our excursion was to observe the 5 PM sailing of Cunard's imposing QUEEN ELIZABETH from the Manhattan Cruise Terminal. Our miniature cruise of 45 minutes departed pretty much at the scheduled time of 4:30, sailing a little north of the Passenger Terminal and back. The ELIZABETH, however, did not move at her scheduled departure time, and there was no sign of activity whatsoever. Most of us chose to remain on board the DESTINY, eyes fixed hopefully on the big ship. Soon it was time for the 7 PM cruise, which was a bit longer, sailing almost as far north as 72nd Street before turning around. Shortly after returning to the pier we were rewarded with action at the Passenger Terminal. The QUEEN ELIZABETH finally backed out into the Hudson, starting her voyage across the pond.

As we waited for the ELIZABETH to sail, we could see how the \$10 bargain might work out. Aside from the leftovers from the earlier cruise, tables were being reserved for five private parties, and rush hour-like hoards were streaming aboard, searching for seats. So if you want to take the North River Lobster Company up on that "all day for \$10" offer, come early in the day. Boarding starts at 3 PM.

It was a fun afternoon, and we've found a new way to ship watch. Thanks to Chairman Pat Dacey for arranging the sunny nautical get together.

BALTIC CRUISE ON HOLLAND AMERICA LINE'S ZUIDERDAM, JUNE 24 – JULY 6, 2019

By David G. Hume

In June, we flew to Copenhagen, Denmark for a twelve-night cruise on Holland America Line's ZUIDERDAM. We arrived two days prior to the cruise in order to explore the city before we embarked. We stayed at the Best Western City Hotel in the Nyhavn district because it was centrally located and an easy metro ride from the airport.

A 48-hour Copenhagen Card, which we had purchased in advance, allowed us unlimited use of trains and buses throughout the city, including the metro ride from the airport. The card also provided free admission to many attractions in Copenhagen, including Rosenborg Castle and the Glyptoteket Museum, which we visited.

On the day of embarkation, we took the metro from the Kongens Nytorv Station to the Norreport Station, where we picked up Bus 25 to Ocean Quay, a modern facility that can handle turnarounds for three large passenger ships. The ZUIDERDAM was docked at Terminal 2. The embarkation process was very efficient. We were able to go aboard quickly and settle into our balcony stateroom located aft on the starboard side of Deck 5, Verandah Deck.

Also at Ocean Quay that day was Oceania Cruises' MARINA, which was docked at Terminal 1. In the distance, we could see Ponant's LE DUMONT D'URVILLE, P&O's AURORA. Marella Cruises' MARELLA EXPLORER (formerly TUI EXPLORER, MEIN SCHIFF I and Celebrity Cruises' GALAXY) was docked along Langelinie, which handles ships making port calls.

The ZUIDERDAM, which entered service in 2002, was the first of Holland America Line's four Vista class ships. The other ships in this class are the NOORDAM, which we sailed on in February, the OOSTERDAM and the WESTERDAM. The ZUIDERDAM is 936 feet long and has a beam of 105.8 feet. The ship carries 1,964 passengers and has a crew of 842. It has a speed of 24 knots and a gross tonnage of 82,305. The ZUIDERDAM has two cylindrical funnels adorned with the new Holland America Line logo of the stylized bow of the NIEUW AMSTERDAM of 1938 without the image of the sailing ship HALVE MAEN (Half Moon), which had been part of the old logo.

On our cruise, the Captain of the ZUIDERDAM was Bart Vaartjes, a Dutch-American from Florida, and the Staff Captain was Vincent C. Engel from England. The Cruise Director was Bradley Maziere from England and the Hotel Director was Darren David Lewis from Germany.

Once we had checked out our stateroom, we had lunch in the Lido Market on Deck 9. Afterwards, we set about exploring the ZUIDERDAM.

The Atrium, in the middle of the ship, spans Decks 1, 2 and 3. On Deck 1, surrounding the base of the atrium, are Guest Services on the port side, a small bar under the stairs, and the Future Cruises Office on the starboard side. Daily news summaries and crossword puzzles are available in a rack near Guest Services.

The main public rooms are located on Decks 2 and 3. On Deck 2 forward is the Mainstage, the principal theater on board for production shows and various entertainers. This theater extends from Deck 1 to Deck 3. Holland America Line has introduced a new concept in its Mainstage theater productions. This is the Step One Dance Company, six dancers who perform to pre-recorded music with video special effects in the background. This dance company replaces the four singers and eight dancers who usually provide the production shows on Holland America Line ships, such as on our NOORDAM cruise. The dance company performed two shows during our cruise. We also saw two comedians, a pianist, a string quartet (Lincoln Center Stage), and an English quartet, the Four Tunes, who sang popular songs ranging from rock and roll to jazz classics and Broadway show tunes.

When you exit the Mainstage and proceed aft on Deck 2, the Casino is on the port side with the Billboard Onboard Lounge on the starboard side. This lounge featured two pianists playing rock and roll classics. There was always a lively crowd in this venue. The Gallery Bar, the most elegant room aboard the ship, is in a secluded area on the starboard side aft of the Casino. This is Captain Vaartjes' favorite lounge. Just aft of the Gallery Bar is America's Test Kitchen, which becomes B.B. King's Blues Club at night. At the Atrium, the Pinnacle Grill is on the port side and the Pinnacle Bar on the starboard side. Further along on the starboard side are the Art Gallery, Lincoln Center Stage, Explorer's Lounge and the Digital Workshop. At the stern is the lower level of the Dining Room.

On Deck 3 forward is the balcony of the Mainstage. Walking aft on Deck 3, you will find the Screening Room, where movies are shown, on the starboard side and the Hudson Room and the Half Moon Room, which serve as card rooms and special event rooms, on the port side. The shops follow on the port and starboard sides. The Ocean Bar surrounds the Atrium. Continuing aft, the Photo Gallery is on the starboard side. The upper level of the Dining Room is at the stern.

The outdoor promenade is on Deck 3. This deck provides enough space for passengers to walk around the ship while other passengers relax in deck chairs.

Staterooms are located on Decks 4 through 8. The largest suites are on Deck 7, Rotterdam Deck. Also on Deck 7 is the Neptune Lounge for passengers in the Pinnacle and Neptune Suites. A concierge in this lounge provides assistance to passengers with reservations for restaurants and port tours.

The bridge of the ship is located at the forward end of Deck 8, Navigation Deck. Above the bridge, on Deck 9, Lido Deck, is the Greenhouse Spa and Salon and the Fitness Club. Walking aft on Deck 9, you arrive mid-ship at the Lido Pool and Lido Bar, which are covered by a magrodome roof, followed by the Lido Market, a portion of which on the starboard side becomes the Canaletto Restaurant at night. The Sea View Pool and Sea View Bar are at the stern.

The Crow's Nest Lounge is on Deck 10, Observation Deck, with views overlooking the bow. Within this space, on the starboard side, you will also find a small library and the Explorations Central office, where port tours are sold.

Directly above the Crow's Nest Lounge, on Deck 11, Sports Deck, is an outdoor observation space forward of the mast. Aft of the mast is The Retreat, an area with cabanas which are available to passengers for a fee. Also on Deck 11 is the Sports Court, which is behind the second funnel.

A daily program, *When and Where*, is provided every night in the cabins. This program details the events of the following day.

During this cruise, we opted for anytime dining. This worked very well for the most part, since we rarely had to wait more than five minutes for a table. However, we found that the dining room managers consistently tried to seat us in the same area of the dining room. We had to specifically request a new location every day. The food was generally very good, better than the cuisine served on our NOORDAM cruise. The décor in the Dining Room was dark red and maroon, similar to the NOORDAM.

One night during our cruise, we chose to dine in the Pinnacle Grill on Deck 2. On most nights, this restaurant charges a supplement of \$35 per person. We found the ambiance elegant and the service excellent. However, the filet mignon I ordered appeared to have been cooked in advance and was charred on the outside and rare in the middle, rather than medium as I had requested. Our waiter immediately offered to replace the meat, but I had expected better quality food preparation from this restaurant.

We had selected this cruise on the ZUIDERDAM to re-visit ports which we had seen on a previous cruise in the Baltic aboard Celebrity Cruises' MILLENNIUM in 2000. The itinerary of the ZUIDERDAM included most of these ports, except for Oslo and Gdansk.

Our first port of call was at Aarhus, Denmark's second largest city after Copenhagen. No other cruise ships were in port, but the tall ship DENMARK was docked in the inner harbor. We walked into town, visited Aarhus Cathedral and strolled along a tree-lined canal on our way to Den Gamle By, the Old Town Museum.

We spent a day at sea cruising from Aarhus to Tallinn, Estonia. In Tallinn, we were joined by MSC MERAVIGLIA, COSTA MAGICA and LE DUMONT D'URVILLE. We walked into town on a gray, overcast day. We went to Parliament Square, saw Toompea Castle and visited the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. Our route took us by the Great Guild Hall from the 1500's, which now houses the Estonian History Museum.

The next day, we docked at the new cruise terminal in St. Petersburg, Russia. In port that day with the ZUIDERDAM were REGAL PRINCESS, SAGA SAPPHIRE (formerly the EUROPA of Hapag-Lloyd Cruises) and Regent Seven Seas Cruises' SEVEN SEAS EXPLORER. LE DUMONT D'URVILLE was docked in the Neva River for the duration of our two-day stay. On the second day, EXPLORER OF THE SEAS, BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS and AURORA replaced REGAL PRINCESS and SEVEN SEAS EXPLORER.

On our first day in St. Petersburg, we took a bus tour of the major sights, with photo stops at St. Isaac's Cathedral and Exchange Square, which has two red Rostral Columns with statues at the base representing the four major rivers of Russia -- the Volga, Dnieper, Neva and Volkhov. Each column is adorned with facsimile ships' prows, representing ships captured by the tsars. Across the street is the Old Stock Exchange. From this square, we had a good view of the Hermitage Museum in one direction and the Peter and Paul Fortress in the other direction. In the fort, we could see Saints Peter and Paul Church, which contains the tombs of the tsars. Our bus tour continued along the Nevsky Prospect, one of the main streets in St. Petersburg. Here we were given two hours to explore on our own before heading back to the ship.

That evening, we attended a performance at the Maryinsky Theatre. We saw two ballets, Firebird and Scheherazade, which had originally been choreographed by Fokine for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in Paris. Firebird was set to music by Stravinsky and Scheherazade was set to music by Rimsky-Korsakov.

On our second day in St. Petersburg, we toured the Faberge Museum and the Rossi Wing of the General Staff Building on Palace Square opposite the Hermitage Museum. The Faberge Museum contains, among its other treasures, seven of the forty-seven eggs produced by Faberge for the tsars. The Rossi Wing of the General Staff Building now houses the paintings by the Impressionists which used to be exhibited in the Hermitage.

From St. Petersburg, we sailed overnight to Helsinki, Finland. Joining us at the cruise terminal were CELEBRITY REFLECTION and MARINA. LE DUMONT D'URVILLE was docked close to the center of the city. From the port, we took a shuttle bus into town and walked through the streets and parks. We visited Helsinki Cathedral, Uspenski Cathedral and Helsinki Central Station, which was designed by Eliel Saarinen and opened in 1919.

Our next port was Stockholm, Sweden. There were no other cruise ships docked nearby, but we were moored just ahead of the ferry VIKING MARIELLA. In Stockholm, we elected to take two tours. The first was a bus tour of the city ending with a prolonged stop at the Vasa Museum. Here we saw the remains of the warship VASA, which sank on its first voyage in 1628 near where the ZUIDERDAM was docked. The state of preservation of the VASA was astonishing. We had plenty of time to explore and photograph the ship from every angle and from multiple levels.

Our second tour was a visit to Drottningholm Palace, which was originally built in the late 16th century as a summer residence for the royal court. It has been the private residence of the Swedish Royal Family since 1981.

After leaving Stockholm, we enjoyed a day at sea. All passengers who had previously sailed with Holland America Line were invited to a special lunch in the Dining Room, where each was given a tile with an image of the ship as a memento of the cruise.

The next day, we arrived at Warnemunde, Germany, where we were docked with AIDAMAR and SEVEN SEAS EXPLORER. Since we had travelled to Berlin from Warnemunde on a prior cruise, we decided to visit Schwerin Castle. The castle is on an island in Lake Schwerin and used to be the home of the Dukes of Mecklenberg. It now serves as the parliament for the German state of Mecklenberg-Vorpommern. We were shown the rooms formerly occupied by the Dukes. Following our tour, we had lunch at a local restaurant. Before our return to the ship, we stopped off for a brief tour of the port city of Rostock.

From Warnemunde, it was a short sail to Kiel, Germany. There were no other cruise ships in port, but the ferry COLOR FANTASY docked on the other side of the harbor. We chose to walk into town on an overcast and rainy day. We visited the medieval St. Nicholas Church, the Opera House and the Town Hall with its imposing tower. On our departure from Kiel later that day, we passed the entrance to the Kiel Canal, which the ZUIDERDAM was too big to transit.

Our last port of call was Skagen, Denmark, at the tip of the Jutland Peninsula. We walked into town and went to the Skagens Museum, where we saw paintings in the Impressionist style by local artists. On the day of our visit, a local festival was being held, so there were many people at outdoor tables enjoying refreshments and listening to different bands.

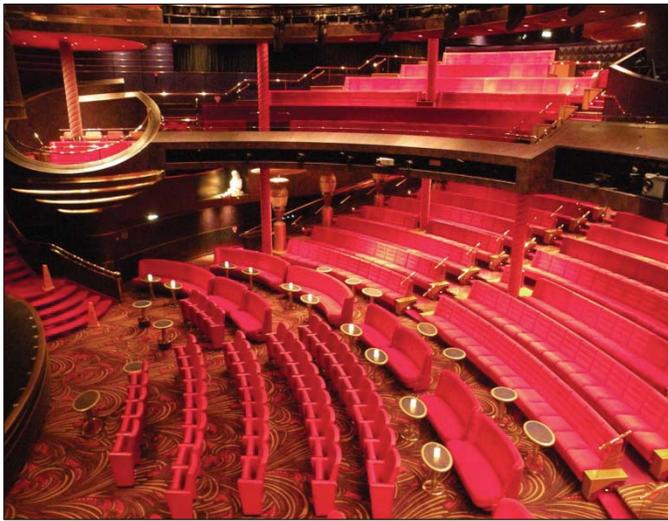
Our cruise terminated at Terminal 3 of Ocean Quay in Copenhagen. We had a leisurely breakfast and left the ship at 9:00 AM. A short walk took us to the bus stop. Here we boarded Bus 25 for a ride to the Norreport Station, where we picked up the metro to the airport.

In total, our cruise encompassed 2,202 miles at an average speed of 15.6 knots. We enjoyed mostly sunny days during our cruise, with temperatures in the 60's and 70's. We look forward to re-visiting these ports in the future.



Holland America's ZUIDERDAM docked in Skagen, Denmark.

(David G. Hume)



Clockwise from top left: ZUIDERDAM's twin funnels feature Holland America's new, streamlined NIEUW AMSTERDAM logo; the cozy Gallery Bar; the Dining Room and Mainstage Theatre. (David G. Hume)

SHIPS IN PORT: THE TARSUS, AND FIESTA CRUISE LINES

By Bill Miller

Even by age twelve, in 1960, I'd been keeping an eye on New York harbor – on its ships and their comings and goings. There were, of course, the daily schedules of arrivals and departures in the New York Times and the Herald Tribune. There was also an order, especially to passenger ships. Generally, shipping lines had assigned piers and so it all became quite familiar. I knew where to look for, say, the QUEEN MARY or the OSLOFJORD or the WESTERDAM. But one summer Friday afternoon, I looked just across the Hudson, from Hoboken, to Grace Line's Pier 57, located in Chelsea, at West 14th Street. The big funnel of either the SANTA ROSA or SANTA PAULA was sitting prominently above the pier rooftop. A few other Grace ships were gathered around as well. But there was another ship, a sort of mystery ship, berthed just to the right, at Pier 56. The single-stacker perplexed me. What could it be? Well, on my way home, I bought a copy of the Tribune and immediately turned to the daily ship schedules. The mystery ship was none other than a little Turkish liner, the TARSUS. The listing showed her as departing at 9:00pm that evening for Bermuda. She was starting a summer series of Bermuda cruises for a brand new company called Fiesta Cruise Lines. A Greek ship-owner named Andrew Kostantinides was involved. Years later, in 1968-69, he would form the Star Line (later restyled as Universal Line) and operate the CARIBIA (ex-CARONIA) in New York-Caribbean cruise service.

Nearly sixty years later, just last summer, I came across a brochure from that long-ago, short-lived Fiesta cruise service. The company lasted but one summer season. They had chartered the TARSUS, the 9,500-ton flagship of the faraway, Istanbul-headquartered Turkish Maritime Lines.

A veteran ship by 1960, she was the former EXOCHORDA of American Export Lines, dating from 1931, and one of the original "Four Aces" (the others being EXCALIBUR, EXETER AND EXCAMBION). The foursome sailed on regular 42-day New York-Mediterranean itineraries. Carrying 125 all-first-class passengers, she was sold to the US Navy as World War II emerged, in October 1940, was renamed USS HARRY LEE and refitted as a troop transport. Later, as the only survivor of the quartet, she was declared surplus after the War ended, in 1946. Sold to Turkey two years later (along with six other American passenger ships), she was restored as a passenger ship and rebuilt at Bethlehem Steel's Key Highway shipyard at Baltimore. The 475-ft long ship went from all first class to three class, now carrying as many as 465 passengers: 189 in first class, 66 second class and 210 in an austere third class.

Mostly, the 14-knot TARSUS sailed on varied services, but often in the Mediterranean, usually between Istanbul, Izmir, Piraeus,

Naples, Genoa and Marseilles. In the 1950s, the single-screw steamship also made several voyages to New York (and to other US ports including Miami), coming from Istanbul as a government-sponsored "trade promotion and development" ship. On several occasions, she berthed at Pier 88, the French Line's terminal at the foot of West 48th Street.

But the TARSUS was hardly the ideal cruise ship, especially in the more demanding American travel market. Times and demands were then more flexible, however, and so Fiesta offered Friday-to-Friday, 7-day cruises between New York and Bermuda. Sailings catered to the business set and were thoughtfully scheduled at 9 PM on Friday evenings. Incredibly cheap fares were the big selling point. Minimum fare for an inside room on a lower deck, with four bunk berths and without private bathroom facilities, was a mere \$115, or \$16 per person per day. Comparatively, long-established Furness-Bermuda Line, with their illustrious QUEEN OF BERMUDA and popular OCEAN MONARCH, had rates beginning at \$150 for a similar 6-night itinerary.

There were no formal results, but Fiesta Cruise Lines was not revived after that inaugural summer service. The TARSUS itself returned home, but months later, in December, she was rammed by a burning tanker in Istanbul harbor. She too caught fire and was damaged beyond repair. Her scorched remains had to be scrapped.



The TARSUS seen in 1955, outbound off Jersey City.

(Bill Miller Collection)

SHIP NEWS

By Bob Allen

A NEW MOON: Silversea's SILVER MOON was floated out at Fincantieri's Ancona, Italy Yard on August 29. The 40,700-ton, 596-passenger ultra-luxury vessel is the latest in Silversea's fast-growing fleet. She will have only a few minor internal changes from her successful sister ship, SILVER MUSE. A third sister, SILVER DAWN, follows in 2021.



SILVER MOON will be the second of Silversea's Muse-Class luxury cruise ships for worldwide service. (Fincantieri Ancona / Silversea Cruises)

A GLOBAL DREAM COMES TRUE: Genting Cruise Lines announced that their first Global-Class vessel will be christened GLOBAL DREAM when she enters service in early 2021. The 204,000-ton liner, currently under construction at MV Werften in Germany, will have a staggering passenger capacity in excess of 9,000. Staterooms for four passengers will feature a twin-bathroom design, which will allow more than one person to use the facilities simultaneously, making the ship's high-density living quarters more pleasurable. In addition, privacy curtains will separate the cabins' sleeping and sitting areas.

DISNEY MAKES A WISH: Disney Cruise Lines announced that its next ship, due to set sail on her maiden voyage in early 2022, will be named DISNEY WISH. The ship's look and feel will be whimsical and fairytale-like; Rapunzel will be seen painting the ship's name on her stern, assisted by Pascal. According to Disney, "Rapunzel embodies the wish and desire to see and experience the world." The DISNEY WISH's atrium will be a fairytale-inspired setting, with a starry ceiling and sweeping staircase. The 144,000-ton, 2,500-passenger vessel will be the first in a new three-ship series for Disney, and will be powered by LNG (liquefied natural gas). In addition to announcing the ship's name, Disney also announced the development of a second private destination in the Bahamas, on the island of Eleuthera. To be called Lighthouse Point, the beach environment will strongly reflect Bahamian culture. Disney will work closely with the Bahamas government to ensure that Lighthouse Point is an environmentally friendly facility. Construction of the new port is tentatively set to commence in 2020, with completion planned for late 2022 or early 2023.



DISNEY WISH's atrium will offer a fanciful introduction to the ship. (above) Disney Cruise Line is planning Lighthouse Point, an environmentally friendly and culturally rich private beach destination on the Bahamian Island of Eleuthera. (below) (Disney Cruise Line)

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