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## POST-WAR SHIPS OF THE AMERICAN EXPORT LINES: THE GENIUS BEHIND THE INDEPENDENCE, CONSTITUTION & THE FOUR ACES

By Christian Roden

The National Opera Center, 330 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue at 29<sup>th</sup> Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Manhattan

When American Export Lines began making plans to resume transatlantic service after World War II, vice president John Slater realized that economic circumstances were changing significantly. Technological developments meant that affordable high-speed air travel was projected to reduce transoceanic journeys from a week to a matter of hours. It was thought that within a decade, ocean liners would become obsolete. Until then, however, large ships were still the most economically viable option, and American Export felt that the company's investment should remain as profitable and competitive with airline traffic for as long as possible.

To help ensure this, the company hired the renowned industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss, a Brooklyn native, to oversee the design and construction of the postwar fleet. His firm, Henry Dreyfuss Associates, had been a major player on the industrial design scene for fifteen years. Major clients included Western Electric, Bell Telephone Systems and the New York Central Railroad, for which he designed an Art Deco streamlined shroud for their Hudson locomotives, along with four train sets for the 1938 20<sup>th</sup> Century Limited.

On the maritime scene, which is the focus of this talk, Dreyfuss designed six ships for the American Export Lines between 1945 and 1951, beginning with the Four Aces, and then most famously, the CONSTITUTION and INDEPENDENCE.

Christian Roden is the Assistant Director of Data Management and Prospect Research for the University of Pennsylvania Library. He was a 2011-2012 Fulbright Research Fellow in France, researching the career of the ILE DE FRANCE at the Association French Lines in Le Havre. Subsequently, he worked as the Curatorial Associate for the SS United States Conservancy. Ocean Liner history has been his lifelong passion.



The INDEPENDENCE and CONSTITUTION docked at New York's Pier 84 in 1951.

(American Export Lines / Bob Allen Collection)

**NEXT EVENTS:** Membership meetings: Friday February 15 – Crossing & Cruising: the QE2 and the Great Cunarders (QE2 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) by Bill Miller; Friday, March 22 – Fred Olsen's BLACK WATCH by Karl Zimmermann; Friday, April 26 – The Port of Miami Since the 1960's by Alan Jordan; Friday May 31 & Friday, June 28 – Program TBD; Group Cruise to Bermuda on Oceania's INSIGNIA: August 18

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**MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH**



MARE S, formerly NIEUW AMSTERDAM, THOMSON SPIRIT and MARELLA SPIRIT at Piraeus, Greece, November 7, 2018. She departed shortly after this photo was taken on her final voyage to the scrapyard in Alang, India. (Mike Boland)

**ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

<b>SHIP</b>	<b>FROM</b>	<b>TO</b>	<b>VOYAGE</b>	<b>PASSENGER(S)</b>	<b>DATE</b>
NAVIGATOR of the SEAS	Southampton	Southampton	Mediterranean Cruise	Larry & Mary Levine	09/18
ANTHEM of the SEAS	Bayonne	Bayonne	Bermuda Cruise	Charles & Catherine Crawford	10/18
NORWEGIAN BREAKAWAY	New York	New Orleans	Repositioning Cruise	Bob Brown	10/18
NIEUW STATENDAM	Civitavecchia	Ft. Lauderdale	Maiden Transatlantic Crossing	Karl & Laurel Zimmerman	11/18
NIEUW STATENDAM	Civitavecchia	Ft. Lauderdale	Maiden Transatlantic Crossing	Charles & Marjorie Zuckerman	11/18
NIEUW STATENDAM	Ft. Lauderdale	Ft. Lauderdale	Bahamas Cruise	Tom Cassidy	11/18
ALLURE of the SEAS	Miami	Miami	Eastern Caribbean Cruise	Bob Allen & Rob Rothberg	12/18
SEVEN SEAS EXPLORER	Capetown, South Africa	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	South Atlantic Crossing	Tom Cassidy	01/19

**WORLD SHIP SOCIETY, PORT OF NEW YORK  
BRANCH RATIFICATION OF OFFICERS FOR 2019-2020**

Votes were tallied in late December for the election of officers of the World Ship Society, PONY Branch, for 2019-2020. Results of the election are indicated below. We wish to thank all of the members who voted in the election.

Total Votes Submitted = 87

<b>Chairman</b>	Pat Dacey	87	100%
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	Bob Allen	86	98.8%
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Stuart Gewirtzman	87	100%
<b>Branch Secretary</b>	Doug Newman	86	98.8%
<b>Treasurer</b>	Marjorieann Matuszek	87	100%

**SHIP'S LOG**

Ship's Log will return in the February issue of The Porthole.

**SHIPS IN PORT – GRAND WELCOME: THE MAIDEN ARRIVAL OF THE QE2**

**By Bill Miller**

Unfortunately, it was grayish and overcast – and even looked like there might be rain. But the moods were ones of excitement, anticipation and certainly celebration. Some 150 members of the World Ship Society were booked – we were boarding a

specially chartered vessel, normally on the run to the Statue of Liberty, to sail out beyond the Lower Bay and under the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge for a very special arrival. Now some fifty years ago, we were awaiting the maiden arrival of the QUEEN ELIZABETH 2.

As the BERGENSFJORD later slipped past us, bound on a late morning departure for Copenhagen and Oslo, we were a crowded boat. And the boats and assorted craft around us seemed crowded with well-wishers as well: the aft end of Moran and McAllister tugs, chartered Circle Line vessels and of course lots of yachts and pleasure boats. Finally, out of the milky-colored mist in the southwest, the faint silhouette of the QUEEN would appear. She looked, in those times, huge and imposing. But we had to adjust, having so recently seen the QUEEN MARY and then QUEEN ELIZABETH depart on their final voyages from New York. They were classic liners – having, for example, funnels placed amidships and wearing the Cunard colors, especially that distinctive orange-red. But the new Cunarder was quite different: no real funnel and instead a device placed aft and then, with some frowns and even sad faces, no Cunard colors. The new age of ocean liners might have dawned right then and there.

As the 65,863-ton ship, already dubbed QE2, drew closer, horns and whistles and sirens began their long chorus of welcome. The liner moved gracefully, royally if you will, and passed under the Verrazano and then slowly northwards to the Upper Bay and along the Hudson. It seemed every ship, large or small, took a turn and offered a loud salute. A French Line freighter at Pier 32 and then another from Grace Line but at Pier 40 seemed to pause in being “worked” by dockers and signaled salutes with their whistles. Even ships in the Bethlehem Steel shipyard in Hoboken gave a few blasts. The 963-ft long liner might be the flagship of the illustrious Cunard Line, but in ways she was flagship of all the seas. She was, after all, a Cunard QUEEN. And in rather quick time, especially after her first winter world cruise in 1975, she would become the most famous liner in the world.

Our vessel waited in mid-Hudson as several Moran tugs nosed the QE2 into the south side of Pier 92. Yes, she looked big, powerful and sleek. Once back at home in Hoboken that night, I looked northward to Luxury Liner Row. The QE2 towered above the rooftops of the piers – she looked radiant. She was illuminated and specially floodlit from end to end. Yes, the new QUEEN had arrived – and the end to another exciting occasion with the World Ship Society.



The legendary QE2 in Upper New York Bay on her maiden arrival, May 7, 1969.

(Bill Miller)

### **LIMITED SPACE IS STILL AVAILABLE ON WORLD SHIP SOCIETY - PONY'S SUMMER BERMUDA CRUISE!**

On August 18, 2019, World Ship Society PONY members will be departing on a very exciting cruise. For the first time, upscale operator Oceania Cruises will be sailing 7-day round-trip cruises from New York to St. George's and Hamilton, Bermuda. We will be cruising on the luxurious, intimate 684-passenger INSIGNIA. 53 branch members and friends have already signed up, making this one of the largest groups we have had in many years. There is still limited space available. For more information, call Brad Hatry at Travel Edge, 212-265-8420, x 222, or 800-729-7472 x 222, or email [brad.hatry@traveledge.com](mailto:brad.hatry@traveledge.com).



Oceania's INSIGNIA departing New York on July 25, 2018 (above left). The main dining room, as it will appear after completion of the “Oceania NEXT” renovation program, which will cosmetically refresh the existing fleet (above right). (Bob Allen and Oceania Cruises)

## SHIP NEWS

By Bob Allen

**AN ADVENTURER FOR CORAL:** Coral Expeditions launched its new 5,500-ton, 120-passenger vessel CORAL ADVENTURER at Vard Vung Tau Shipyard in Vietnam. The early-December launch was unusual – it involved moving the ship from the builder's yard to a floating dock for interior fit-out. Shifting the hull of the new ship took two days. Once completed, CORAL ADVENTURER will depart on her maiden voyage along the Kimberly Coast from Singapore to Darwin, Australia on April 24, 2019. She will then begin a series of cruises between Darwin and Broome, followed by deployment from Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Coral Expeditions, based in Cairns, Australia is marketed in the United Kingdom and the United States, in addition to Australia and Southeast Asia. They are expanding marketing efforts in Germany, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark as well.



CORAL ADVENTURER, as she will look upon her debut in Australian waters on April 24, 2019 (top). She is currently fitting out in a floating drydock at Vard Vung Tau Shipyard in Vietnam (bottom). (Coral Expeditions)

**OCEANIA ORDERS:** Oceania Cruises, the premium line owned by NCL Holdings, has announced two new ships to be introduced in 2022 and 2025. They will be the line's first newly constructed vessels since the 66,000-ton, 1,250-passenger sister ships MARINA (2011) and RIVIERA (2012). Since 2012, Oceania has added only one vessel: the 30,000-ton SIRENA (1999), built for Renaissance Cruises and sister to the first three vessels of the fleet. The new ships, to be called ALLURA-Class, will be of very similar dimensions to the MARINA-Class. They are designed to be just slightly larger at 67,000-tons but will carry about 50 passengers less, therefore yielding a higher space ratio. As noted above, ships of this size are a rarity in new cruise ship construction today, and are particularly desirable for those who prefer a traditional upscale cruise without entering the all-inclusive luxury market. The new ships will be built at Fincantieri in Italy at a cost of approximately 575 million euros each, and will offer worldwide deployment. They are being designed to achieve Oceania's goal of delivering superb food and service, as well as stylish interiors using high quality materials and furnishings.



Oceania Cruises' MARINA (2011) docked at Tallinn, Estonia on June 29, 2016. She and her sister ship RIVIERA (2012) were Oceania's first newly constructed vessels. A similarly sized second pair, the ALLURA-Class, will join the fleet in 2022 and 2025. (Bob Allen)

**NEW PLATFORM FOR MSC YACHT CLUB:** Fast-growing MSC Cruises is designing a new, smaller luxury vessel based on its highly successful "ship within a ship" Yacht Club concept. Offered on their larger ships, MSC Yacht Club is basically an ultra-deluxe first class. MSC has ordered four 1,000-passenger, 64,000-ton ships, with which they will gain entry to the luxury market. To be built by Fincantieri in Italy, the lead vessel of the unnamed class will enter service in 2023; a sister ship will join the fleet each of the following three years. Details of the new vessels are scarce, but MSC promises that they will feature exciting Italian design, be very environmentally friendly, and offer "ground-breaking options for guest comfort and relaxation." Butler service will be provided around the clock, and due to the ships' modest size, unique itineraries will be planned.

**2020 DEPLOYMENTS ANNOUNCED:** Many cruise lines are announcing 2020 deployments, and the Port of New York & New Jersey will see some first-time visitors. Royal Caribbean will finally bring an OASIS-Class vessel to the port; the four-ship class (soon to grow to five) is comprised of the world's largest passenger ships ever built. The lead vessel of the class, 2009-built OASIS OF THE SEAS, will begin a series of cruises to the Caribbean and Canada/New England starting in May. Sailing from the RCCL terminal in Bayonne NJ, the 225,282-ton, 6,360 passenger vessel will be the largest passenger ship that has entered the port. The OASIS will make her northeast debut shortly after she completes a major renovation. These "Royal Amplified" improvements are intended to bring her up to the standards of newest ships in the fleet. Norwegian Cruise Lines will bring NORWEGIAN ENCORE, a BREAKAWAY-Plus Class ship to New York for summer Bermuda and fall Bahamas cruises beginning in April 2020. CARNIVAL RADIANCE will be the new name of the current CARNIVAL VICTORY following a \$200-million rebuilding planned for early 2020. After a Transatlantic crossing from Barcelona in June 2020, she will offer the first cruises of the modern era from New York to Cuba. Bermuda and Canada/New England cruises will also be featured in her summer season from New York

**FACELIFT FOR A QUEEN:** Cunard's eight-year-old QUEEN ELIZABETH was sent to Damen Shiprepair in Brest, France for a 12-day overhaul in November, where she was placed in one of Europe's largest drydocks. At a length of 420 meters or 1,378 feet, the massive dock can accommodate today's largest megaships. Much of the work was technical in nature, including maintenance of Azipod propulsion units, stabilizers, bow thrusters, water intakes, lifeboats, tenders and life rafts. Environmentalists will be pleased to know that new exhaust gas cleaning equipment was installed. Some of the staterooms and

corridors were refurbished, as were the ship's spa and shopping center. On the exterior, the QUEEN glowed with freshly painted and cleaned hull and superstructure when she sailed back into service on November 27.

**VARIETY OF THE SEAS:** No, not a new Royal Caribbean ship, but variety sums up the record 24 new cruise ships set to debut in 2019. From the 183,900-ton, 6,600-passenger COSTA SMERALDA to Antarctica XXI's 4,900-ton, 100-passenger MAGELLAN EXPLORER, a ship is being built for all tastes. However, there are only 3 ships coming on line of intermediate size, between 20,000 and 60,000-tons with passenger capacity of 500 - 1,250. The balance is either mega-ships of more than 100,000-tons (9), or exploration vessels of less than 20,000-tons (12). Here they are in ascending size, arriving soon at a port near (or not so near) you! Under 20,000-tons: MAGELLAN EXPLORER, CORAL ADVENTURER, CELEBRITY FLORA, HONDIUS, GREG MORTIMER, FLYING CLIPPER, WORLD EXPLORER, LE BOUGAINVILLE, LE DUMONT-D'URVILLE, HANSEATIC NATURE, HANSEATIC INSPIRATION and ECLIPSE. Between 20,000 and 60,000-tons: ROALD AMUNDSEN, VIKING JUPITER and SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY. Above 100,000-tons: MEIN SCHIFF 2, COSTA VENIZIA, CARNIVAL PANORAMA, SKY PRINCESS, NORWEGIAN ENCORE, SPECTRUM OF THE SEAS, MSC BELLISSIMA, MSC GRANDIOSA and COSTA SMERALDA. In addition to these ships scheduled for 2019, the total number of ships on order is also at an all-time high. 124 new cruise ships are planned for delivery to 19 operators between 2019 and 2027. The total number of new berths will be over 268,000, with the average ship being of approximately 91,000-tons with a 2,240-passenger capacity.



Many cruise ships currently under construction are part of a class of vessels. Viking Ocean Cruises will introduce additional identical ships of the VIKING STAR-Class (2015), bringing the total number in the series to 16 by 2027. With a tonnage of 47,842 and a passenger capacity of 930, the Viking Ocean sisters are of a somewhat rare mid-size, reminiscent of cruise ships of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century. Two additional "special" ships are in development, although details have not been released. VIKING SKY (2017), seen here docked at New York on October 4, 2017 is the third ship of the series. (Bob Allen)

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