



“GRACE LINE PASSENGER-FREIGHTERS IN THE 1950’s”

By George Gillow

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2024, 6:30 PM
LIVE FROM CALIFORNIA VIA ZOOM

Growing up in an American mining town in northern Chile was quite an adventure. One of the most exciting times for George Gillow was traveling to the US on Grace Line passenger-freighters thanks to the Anaconda Mining Company who sent their employees’ families to the US for vacations every three years. This presentation is about what it was like traveling on these passenger-freighters. It was very different from traveling on modern cruise ships.



Grace Line Painting by Carl Evers (*George Gillow Collection*)



About Our Presenter: George Gillow completed a 39-year career as an Electronic Engineer and Technical Manager. He spent the next 20 years working on maritime systems such as GPS, ship handling simulators and vessel traffic services. In the 1980’s, George played a key role in getting the first cruise ship, SS AZURE SEAS, to visit and to establish regular cruise ship service to San Diego, CA. He also supported the establishment of the Port of San Diego Cruise Ship Consortium.

ADDITIONAL MEMBER EVENT

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

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

By Bill Miller, Author

FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2024, 6:30 PM

JOIN US VIA ZOOM

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



(Bill Miller Collection)



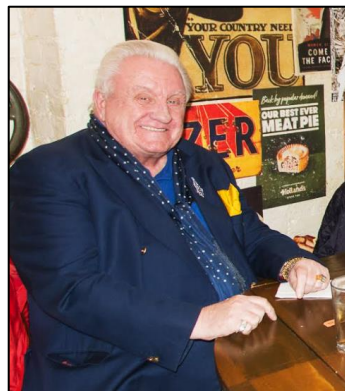
About Our Presenter: Called “Mr. Ocean Liner”, Bill Miller, is considered an international authority on the subject of ocean liners and cruise ships. He has written over 100 books on the subject. Bill, a world traveler with hundreds of sea voyages, is a much sought-after presenter and blogger. He is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

MEMBER PHOTOS

THE CHURCHILL TAVERN, JANUARY 7, 2024, WSS-PONY BRANCH HOLIDAY PARTY



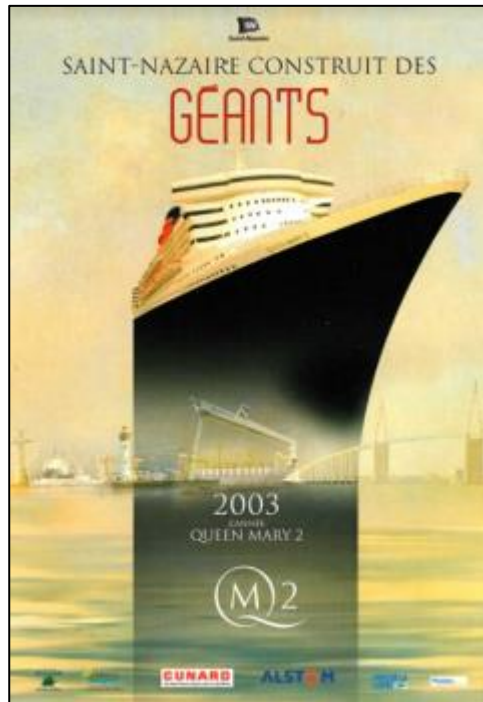
"Yes, a wonderful afternoon...there's nothing like being with friends, fellow enthusiasts & just talking about ships & the sea!" Bill Miller (Bill Miller photos)



(Stuart Gewirtzman photos)

SHIP'S LOG: "GENESIS OF A QUEEN: QUEEN MARY 2" by Stephen Payne, O.B.E.

Review By Pat Dacey



Shipyards Promotional announcing the construction of QM2.

As the Cunard transatlantic liner QUEEN MARY 2 completed its second decade of service in January and is quickly approaching another milestone, her 400th transatlantic crossing from New York on August 23, 2024, the WSS-PONY Branch was fortunate to have her designer, Dr. Stephen Payne, O.B.E., present for us. On January 26, 2024, we welcomed Stephen who presented from the UK, his program "GENESIS OF A QUEEN: QUEEN MARY 2" to our audience via Zoom including a "live" viewing party at the Steamship Historical Society's Ship History Center in Warwick, R.I.

This timely presentation was a very personal journey on how the design of QUEEN MARY 2 evolved and how it closely aligned with Stephen's childhood interests, his fascination with ocean liners and his ultimate career achievement as the principal naval architect of the Cunard Line and designer of "the biggest and most luxurious ocean liner ever".

The beginning of Stephen's personal journey began with a story of a single red dot or more precisely the passing of two great liners, the QUEEN ELIZABETH and QUEEN MARY on September 25, 1967 on what would be their last passing on the North Atlantic. Although not present at the event, Stephen felt that the event signaled what many considered to be the end of the North Atlantic ferry, and the only hope was that Queen Elizabeth 2 would be able to carry on. Yet, he wondered what would happen after her withdrawal from service. This along with an article in the UK's 1973 *Blue Peter* annual noting that the QUEEN ELIZABETH was the last superliner and nothing like her would be built again. It was the same year that Stephen set his sights on designing and building a new superliner.

After graduating with a BS in Engineering – Ship Science from the University of Southampton, and a short time with Marconi Radar, Stephen started working with Carnival Cruise Line and later named him the project manager for the construction of ROTTERDAM (VI). Shortly after the purchase of Cunard Line by Carnival in 1998, Stephen was assigned the task of designing the successor to QUEEN ELIZABETH 2, codenamed "Project Queen Mary".

With the history of Carnival's "Project Queen Mary" presented, Stephen discussed that the goal of Carnival Corporation was to build the largest ocean liner ever built and to evoke the spirit of a bygone era of seagoing luxury. With that a letter of intent was signed with the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard in France on March 10, 2000, and two years of design and testing on the new liner would now be shared with the yard in preparation for the construction to begin.



Saint Nazaire: Crowning the QM2 on March 13, 2003.



Saint Nazaire: Lowering the upper part of the funnel into position on April 4, 2003.

Since "Project Queen Mary" was unique and anticipated to be a one-off design, Stephen had the opportunity to look at other successful ships and integrate the best design elements and engineering standards into the new construction. According to Stephen, "Designing any ship is a compromise between numerous conflicting demands; prioritizing these, particularly with a passenger ship, is a prerequisite. When the passenger ship is a liner rather than a cruise ship, the task becomes even more onerous. QUEEN MARY 2 was the ultimate challenge."

Stephen discussed in detail the process from specification and design to the construction process including simulation models to ensure that the ship could and would remain on schedule regardless of

the sea conditions across the North Atlantic. Other design elements discussed were the ultimate height of the funnel which was determined by the high tide clearance under the Verrazano Narrows Bridge and the first use of electric motors to operate the Mermaid propulsion pods instead of a conventional rudder. An amazing animation was shown which demonstrated how the 98 separate construction blocks (segments) were assembled to form the ship.



Saint Nazaire: View of "G32" in the assembly dock.

Taking the audience through the construction process, Stephen proceeded to sea trials and delivery including the naming ceremony by Her Majesty The Queen. Stephen then took the audience on a "behind the scenes" guided tour of QUEEN MARY 2 pointing out many informative and previously unknown facts behind many design features. Providing an overview of her 20-year career including her significant "Remastering" at the Blohm+Voss Shipyard in Hamburg during 2016 up to the present and beyond, Stephen went full circle and ended with some personal notes and tributes about his journey and those that helped him succeed.

Concluding the more than two-hour program was an engaging and informative question and answer session with questions from our Zoom meeting attendees. WSS-PONY Branch extends its sincere thanks on behalf of its membership to Stephen for an entertaining and enlightening evening celebrating the history of QUEEN MARY 2. May she sail for many years to come!



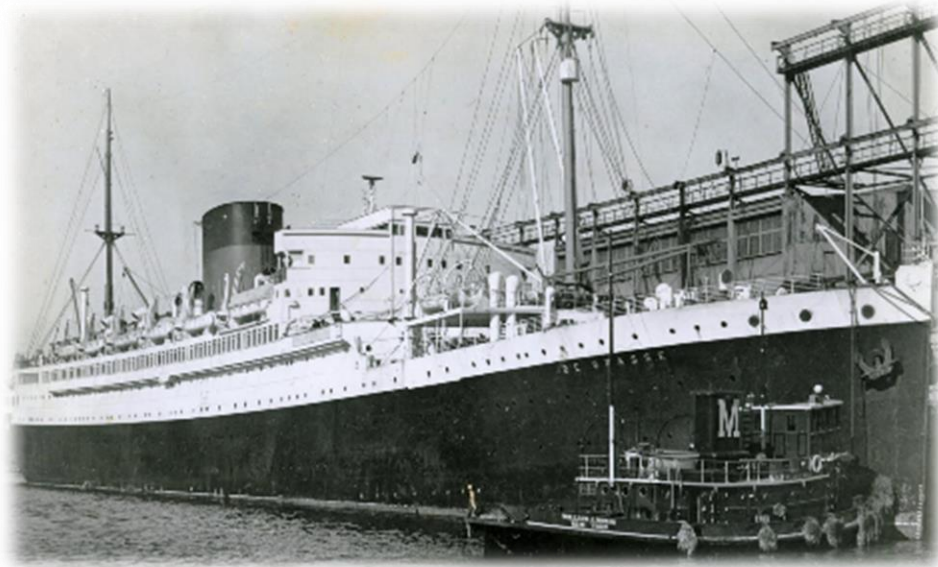
Clyde-built P.S. WAVERLEY (1947) alongside QUEEN MARY 2.

(All images: Pat Dacey Collection)

SHIPS IN PORT: THE LIBERTE & OTHER FRENCH LINERS OF THE FIFTIES

By Bill Miller

In 1938, Jane Bouche Strong traveled home from Europe on North German Lloyd's EUROPA. It was an eventful if less than pleasant crossing. "We returned to America [having gone over on the QUEEN MARY] that winter on the heels of the Munich Crisis," she remembered. "Our passage had been hastily arranged on the EUROPA. Worries about a probable war were not calmed by the crossing: "The sea was very rough and the three of us [she was traveling with two sisters] were violently sick in a cramped, airless stateroom." Little did the then very young Jane realize that the EUROPA would become one of her favorites, if not most favorite, ocean liner.



Rebuilt after World War II with a single funnel, the DE GRASSE departs from Pier 88.



Left: A three-stacker as built in 1927, the celebrated ILE DE FRANCE resumed sailings in 1949 with a more modern two funnels. Right: A distinctive French Line baggage tag.

"During the 1950s, we traveled back and forth on the French Line – on the DE GRASSE, the ILE DE FRANCE, the FLANDRE and particularly on the LIBERTE," she recalled. "That last named ship was none other than the transformed EUROPA of dreadful memory. She had been a war reparation to the French. By the time you had embarked on your second Transat [for Compagnie Generale Transatlantique] voyage, you were well on your way to becoming a passenger fidele, one of the faithful, and were treated accordingly. [Jane had previously crossed on a CGT freighter in 1948.] Your name,

preferences and even your birthday were remembered. For just such an occasion, LIBERTE's purser, Robert Bellet, invited us to lunch in a small private dining room. It was all grandly intimate and special. The Champagne flowed throughout. Afterward he escorted us to his own sitting room for coffee and Calvados. On a center table was a Champagne bucket filled with flowers of a curious scent; they had been carved by Monsieur Papion, the chef, out of carrots, leeks, and turnips."



The popular LIBERTE at Pier 88 -- with the CARONIA on the left.

Mrs. Strong continued her recollections of the famed French liners. "In those years, crossings might take seven or eight days. In later years, on the faster FRANCE, they took only five days – and those exclusive little parties were dispensed with. Instead, two huge cocktail parties took care of the whole first class, half at a time. The LIBERTE, however, had three classes, and at one time or another I traveled in each of them – from the bottom of the decks, at age twenty-five, when no amount of wind and rain in my hair concerned me, or up into first class and an age when I suddenly found my hair tinged with blue and realized I preferred a mink jacket for the chilly dining room."



Making a late morning departure, the FLANDRE broke down on its maiden voyage in July 1952. (Moran Towing & Transportation Co)

(All photos and images except as noted: Bill Miller Collection)

DEAR WSS-PONY BRANCH MEMBERS
By Denise Dacey, WSS-PONY Branch Chairperson

Dear Members,

I hope everyone enjoyed our 2023 member meetings, Encore Presentations, and in-person activities. I enjoyed every program and very sincerely thank all our presenters. The wonderful Joe Farcus, Captain Albert, Brian O'Connor, and many other presentations, our super fun Liberty of the Seas group cruise, the visit to the Titanic-the Exhibition, and our holiday party at The Churchill Tavern were particular highlights for me!

As a recent update, the WSS-PONY Branch Board voted to adopt a Zoom-only format for our monthly membership meetings. This decision was made in consideration of rental space costs and the declining in-person attendance, starting before the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the same time, both the Board and I, believe the convenience and ease of attending Zoom meetings versus a Friday trip into or across NYC continues to be an attractive option for many members including those attending from outside the NYC area. For example, last week, we had 133 unique Zoom viewers attending Stephen Payne's engaging presentation to our members and guests. The Q&A session, which is much easier to manage in a Zoom-only format, provided excellent questions for Stephen to share additional insights about his presentation. With the Zoom-only format applied to every member meeting, we also benefit from the broadest span of potential presenters.

The WSS-PONY Branch will continue to arrange in-person activities throughout the year, like those we fondly recall from recent years, such as Sea Dart II harbor cruises, museum visits, ship-related exhibits, and more. We will continue to seek out additional ship visit opportunities. Be assured we will share these in-person opportunities with you throughout 2024. With this mind, if you haven't yet made your reservations, why not consider joining us for the SSHSA group cruise in November. Like our 2023 group cruise, the upcoming cruise will surely be a 2024 highlight! Please see below for details!

I along with the WSS-PONY Branch Board wish everyone a happy and healthy 2024. We look forward to connecting with all of you at our monthly Zoom meetings and at our 2024 in-person WSS-PONY Branch events! Stay tuned!

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



CRUISE DETAILS

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

Includes private cocktail party & other group perks!

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

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

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

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

SHIP NEWS
Compiled by Pat Dacey

FIRST CHINESE NEWBUILD CRUISE SHIP SAILS ON MAIDEN VOYAGE



MS ADORA MAGIC CITY

(Adora Cruises photo)

The ADORA MAGIC CITY, the first domestically built cruise ship in China sailed on her maiden voyage on January 1st, 2024, from its homeport of Shanghai for a six-day cruise to South Korea and Japan. ADORA MAGIC CITY is operated by CSSC Carnival Cruise Shipping Ltd. and is a joint venture between China's largest shipbuilding company China State Shipbuilding Corp. and Carnival Corporation.

Built by CSSC Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding Co., ADORA MAGIC CITY is 1,062 feet long and can accommodate up to 5,246 passengers in 2,125 guest rooms. The 16-deck cruise ship boasts 22 restaurants and bars — including a Mahjong lounge, beer brewery and hotpot outlet, duty-free shops and theaters showing Chinese themed musicals.

The construction of ADORA MAGIC CITY is a major milestone for China, demonstrating the ability of Chinese shipbuilders to complete large and challenging projects in addition to recent deliveries of an aircraft carrier and large liquefied natural gas carriers.

(Source: gcaptain.com)

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Regular meetings with speakers on maritime topics, local outings, group cruises, friends & more!

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<https://worldshipny.com>

CARNIVAL FIRENZE BECOMES THE 27th SHIP IN CARNIVAL FLEET



CARNIVAL FIRENZE at Cadiz, Spain (Cruise Industry News photo)

On February 2, 2024, CARNIVAL FIRENZE officially joined the Carnival Cruise Line fleet in Cadiz, Spain, for a handover from sister company Costa, growing the Carnival brand to a fleet of 27 ships. Based upon the success of Carnival’s “Carnival Fun Italian Style” program with the CARNIVAL VENEZIA, the Carnival team is leading a two-month refurbishment project that will add Carnival signature features to the ship while still retaining significant Costa brand elements such as the original Italian architecture.

CARNIVAL FIRENZE will be homeported year-round from Long Beach, CA starting on April 25, 2024, and will sail a series of three-to-seven-day cruises to the Mexican Riviera and Catalina Island.

(Source: Carnival Corporation)

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

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