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The Nieuw Amsterdam, USS Mayflower, P&O-Orient Lines and more . . .

The opening scene from the 1954 Oscar-winning movie, On the Waterfront, treats the viewer to another winner – the 1938 Nieuw Amsterdam, berthed at her Hoboken, New Jersey, pier. In this first issue of the new year, Terry Tilton offers a detailed history of this underrated ship and shows why he thinks it’s the best passenger ship of all time. It’s a great article – be sure to read it.

Also in this Issue

• In Lives of the Liners, William Miller tells the story of P&O-Orient Lines through interviews with some of its most loyal customers. The story focuses on the ’50s and ’60s, when P&O filled its older liners with lots of low-fare passengers, when its new generation of bigger, larger, better-equipped liners was built for the Great Britain-Australia run, and when voyages began to serve North America’s West Coast and soon expanded worldwide, touching on over 100 ports in all.

• In his follow-up article on U.S. presidential yachts (Summer 2019), Gary Lombardo introduces us to the USS Mayflower, the largest presidential yacht and, arguably, the most luxurious. The Mayflower had an illustrious career, serving the U.S. government for nearly 50 years, which included service as a presidential yacht under five administrations. She served as both a Navy and Coast Guard ship and saw military action in the Spanish-American War, World War I and World War II.

• Eric Wiberg presents a riveting account of the General Greene to the rescue. During World War II this U.S. Coast Guard Cutter whisked Allied merchant sailors back to Nantucket, sailors who were rescued from five lifeboats of four of the 38 Allied ships attacked by 73 U-boats from Nova Scotia to Montauk.

• Eric Pearson reveals the story of the first floating nuclear power plant, a World War II Liberty ship that was modified by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers in the 1960s and renamed Stugís. The Corps developed a nuclear power reactor plant capable of generating 10 megawatts of electricity (similar to the plant onboard the NS Savannah), which was used in the Panama Canal Zone from 1967 until 1976, when it began long-term storage and final decommissioning in 2018.

From the Pilot House

Jim Pennypacker, Editor-in-Chief

Articles Wanted

We’re continually looking for articles for the upcoming issues of PowerShips. If you would like to write an article, send me a note (editor@sshsa.org) describing your article idea and we’ll talk. In addition to articles on engine-powered ships of all kinds, we’re interested in articles on Ocean Liners, Ship Builders, Mechanical Aspects, Ship Models, Merchant Marine, Ship Preservation, Ship Interiors and Memorabilia. Of course, we welcome articles on all topics of interest to SSHSA members.
Regarding Mazatlan

Q: I have a photo of my great-grandfather aboard a ship called Mazatlan. He was a purser during the 1920s. Do you know of more information about this ship?

A: The Mazatlan was a steel, twin-screw oil tanker with two decks. She was built in 1920 by the Long Beach Shipbuilding Company, and at that time managed by a company called Swayne & Hoyt. She was 164.3 feet long and 34 feet wide, with a draft of 20 feet, and was equipped with two diesel engines that ran at 700 horsepower. In Lloyd’s registers for 1923 she’s listed as a U.S.-flagged ship with a home port in Los Angeles. Her home port became San Diego when in 1937 she was purchased by the Star and Crescent Boat Company and renamed the San Diegan. She was ultimately scrapped in 1952.

Around the Horn in 1849

Q: I’m researching my great-grandfather, who I found travelled to California in 1849. His ship went around Cape Horn. Do you have any information on what that trip may have been like?

A: Before the Panama Canal was built, global shipping routes, especially those between the east and west coasts of North America, required ships to travel around South America. Cape Horn is part of an archipelago called Tierra del Fuego, and the numerous channels and passages among those islands were used by mariners. They include the famous Strait of Magellan, whose namesake explored the area in 1520, and the Beagle Channel, after the ship of Charles Darwin’s expedition. It was a long voyage, and Cape Horn has historically been a difficult, dangerous passage for ships. Being at the southernmost point of Chile, where the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans meet, the area is infamous for high waves and winds and ferocious storms. Captain William H. S. Jones recounts his experience of “rounding the horn” in his book The Cape Horn Breed, which documents his apprenticeship aboard the ship British Isles between 1905 and 1909: “The wind began to increase in velocity and the seas to rise. By midnight it was a full gale again, with hurricane squalls of sleet, snow and hail, and we were hove to with the helm lashed down. . . . At 4am on 12th September, there was a shattering crash, as a squall of exceptional violence carried away the main topgallant mast and yards. . . . The same squall also carried away and shredded the fore and main topsails, which we had so laboriously bent and finished setting only sixteen hours previously. . . . At dawn the storm was raging with such ferocity that the only way of moving about on the poop-deck was to crawl on our hands and knees. The seas were again mountainous ridges of terrifying proportions, some towering 60 feet above us as we wallowed deep in the troughs before them.” Other books that can tell you more about the experience of sailing around Cape Horn can be found in the SSHSA library: Men and Ships Around Cape Horn, 1616-1939, by Jean Randier, and The Peking Battles Cape Horn, by Captain Irving Johnson.

About Steam Schooners

Q: I have been reading about ships called steam schooners. This seems to be incorrect terminology. They certainly don’t look like schooners. Can you explain why that term is used?

A: “Steam schooner” is correct, if a seeming misnomer. Steam schooners were small vessels designed to carry lumber from the Northern or Mendocino Coast of California in the late 19th century. Since there were very few roads at the time, lumber was shipped by sea. At first, sailing schooners were used to get into the “dog-hole” ports, so named because they were so small only a dog could crawl into them. They were usually no more than small coves or indentations in the coastline. In the early 1880s schooners were purpose-built with steam engines to enable them to maneuver more easily. Soon the schooner hull was dropped in favor of a vertical stem and semi-cylindrical stern. Though the sails were eventually done away with, the masts and booms were retained for loading and unloading. Steam schooners could carry more lumber and run out to sea, if a storm came up, and return quickly, whereas a sailing schooner might be days getting back. Steel steam schooners started to replace wooden steam schooners in the early 20th century. After World War I many “Lakers” were converted to steam schooners, and others had diesel engines, so the term “steam schooner” is really any vessel that carried lumber, regardless of engine type or construction.

Do you have a question for Steamboat Bill?

Just email him at... info@sshsa.org
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February 1 – SS Leviathan: America’s Grandest Ocean Liner, Richard Rabbett

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Elwin Martin Eldredge was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1893. Not long after, he developed an affinity for steamships and became an employee of the Metropolitan Steamship Company. It was here where his impressive collection of steamship ephemera began, including paintings, photos, books, notes and more. During the process of gathering this collection, he became well acquainted with many notable marine historians, such as Samuel Ward Stanton and Antonio Jacobsen. Mr. Eldredge served overseas during World War I and then returned home to work at the family printing business, Eldredge Company. Throughout this time, his fame was growing amongst other steamship historians. His burgeoning collection prompted a move to Kingston, New York, where he could display all comfortably in a house with a view of the Hudson River. By 1939 his collection had grown so large that he decided he could no longer steward it properly, so he sold half of it (about 1500 objects) to the then-new Mariners Museum. The other half remained, so that he might continue to add and edit it as years passed. His memory remained strong and his work never ceased.

During World War II, Mr. Eldredge returned to a more full-time position at Eldredge Company, prompting another move to New York City. After the war, however, he retired from business and built a house on a farm in Clermont, New York. He wasn’t inclined to write much, though his collection would have enabled him to do so easily; Mr. Eldredge preferred to be an informant and a source for others. He was a most unusual man and it shouldn’t be assumed that steam navigation was his sole interest. Actually, his interests were remarkably wide and ranged from the New York theatre, of which he was a devotee for years, to domestic cheese, of which he was a connoisseur. He preferred to host gatherings rather than attend. Throughout his life, his passion remained strong and his work never ceased.

On June 7, 1965, Elwin M. Eldredge passed away in his library, surrounded by his extensive collection. Only hours before, he had entertained a visitor inquiring about a model of Fulton’s North River Steamboat, showing that his passion lasted his entire lifetime.

The entirety of the Eldredge Collection is available for public viewing at the Mariners Museum, but many correspondences, photos and unique ephemera are being re-discovered here at the Ship History Center. Kind regards,

Matthew S. Schulte, M.S.

Upcoming Meetings

- February 29, 2020, SSHSA Winter Board Meeting, New Smyrna Beach, FL
- May 1-3, 2020, Ocean Liner Gala V Events Celebrating the United States Lines, Providence, RI
Greatest Generation

Above is a photo from the Greatest Generations Foundation of World War II veterans who served on the Queen Mary celebrating D-Day on the QM2, which wasn’t used in the article on the Queen Mary by Lorraine Coons in the Fall 2019 issue. Also, her biography had an error – she is the chair of the History Department at Chestnut Hill College and does not teach at Villanova University.

My thanks to Jim Shuttleworth for his Summer 2018 article on the Avalon, built for Goodrich as Virginia. I preferred her striking as-built appearance, but she was attractive as she was modified throughout her long career.

The reason I’m writing is the large opening photo on pages 22–23: it’s not the right Virginia (the one that became the Avalon). Rather, it’s the former Berkeley, built for the Old Dominion Line in 1902 and brought to the Lakes circa 1923 for the Pere Marquette Line Steamers. Aside from differences between the two ships in appearance, you can make out parts of the frost-obscured “Pere Marquette Line Steamers” label painted on the bow.

The article also stated that the Globe Iron Works’ 1891 Virginia was the first steel ship built on the Great Lakes. That honor actually is credited to the bulk carrier Spokane, built by Globe in 1886.

Thanks again for this article,
Dan Cornillie, Naples, Florida

The River Queen

I recently started receiving PowerShips which I am very much enjoying. Growing up as a kid, my father Richard M. Mitchell used to write articles in the Steamboat Bill. The photo at the top of your page [Full Steam Ahead header] is of my dad’s steam launch River Queen. He launched the boat in 1956 on the Connecticut River in Hinsdale, New Hampshire. He authored a book and many magazine articles on steam launches.

PowerShips has brought back many memories of my dad’s friends and trips to visit engine rooms when I was young. Some of these names are as follows: C Bradford Mitchell (dad’s cousin), Conrad Milster, Edward O. Clark, Alexander Crosby Brown, and Captain (in those days) Lauren McCready.

Thanks for the memories. PowerShips is a wonderful publication... a lot different from The Steamboat Bill of Facts.
Thank you.
Gary Mitchell, Cape Coral, Florida

A Missed Star of Steamer Fiction

Dear Jim,
I know that perhaps too much time has passed, but is it too late to make a small criticism about the excellent article in the Summer 2018 issue by Douglas Brooks, entitled “Stars of Steamer Fiction”? I am surprised that he didn’t include one of my favorites—the “Mr. Glencannon” series that appeared in the Saturday Evening Post for about 20 years. They were all about the nefarious adventures of the Incheliffe Castle’s Chief Engineer Colin Glencannon, a heavy drinking, card cheating ne’er do well who somehow managed to be funny and endearing despite

Concerning Clarence Chamberlain

Concerning the photo on Page 7 [Winter 2019] of Clarence Chamberlin on the SS Leviathan. The program was for passengers to write letters as the ship left New York City and they would be flown back to the mainland by Chamberlin from a point out at sea. A point not too far out at sea. Several years ago, I had the pleasure of attending a talk by Chamberlin and he told the story of that event. A temporary short flight deck had been constructed on the ship with a slight downward angle. With the ship at full speed into the wind a takeoff would be possible. The problem was that it had rained and the flight deck was wet. The ship’s captain knew nothing about aviation, therefore he was convinced that without good ground traction a takeoff would not be possible. He delayed the flight until his crew had completely dried the ramp, getting Chamberlin much farther out to sea than he wanted or had planned. He flew off and held his breath for the very limited amount of fuel on board to last to the mainland. Chamberlin’s talk was a wealth of interesting stories and that was just one of them.

Add Austin, Labelle, Florida
it all. He was the only one who could keep the ship’s ancient three-legged main engine operating, which was also the only reason the company put up with him. The stories were written by Guy Gilpatric, who must have had an intimate knowledge of the old three-island tramp steamships in the British merchant marine. Inchcliffe Castle is described in great detail, as well as the pre-WWII sea world in which she navigated under the sometimes hesitant command of Captain Ball. From that time on, all chief engineers in fiction have been Scots – right up to and including the Starship Enterprise’s Scotty.

All best, Buell Hollister, Brookline, Massachusetts

Concerning Queen Mary

I thoroughly enjoyed perusing the article on the Queen Mary (Fall 2019). A couple items of note. In the way it was presented, the captain seemed to serve the whole term of the war years. Also an event in 1942 was not mentioned. The first Commodore Sir James Bisset took command on February 23, 1941, Commodore Cyrill G. Illingworth on August 10, 1942, Captain Roland Spencer on July 29, 1944, and Commodore Chas M. Ford on March 11, 1946. The event in 1942 occurred after Commodore Illingworth took command.

On Friday October 2, 1942, in the North Sea off Northern Ireland, after receiving orders via RAF aircraft blinker, the Queen took on escort at speed for anti-aircraft fire support en route to Scotland. At this time shipping was with-in range of enemy aircraft. The escort consisted of the 1918 cruiser HMS Curacoa, pendant D-41 and several destroyers. All ships were zig-zagging but at slightly different patterns with Queen Mary overtaking and passing the escort member in the North Sea transit. HMS Curacoa crossed the Queen’s course several times. By miscalculation, on what may have been the final cross at about 14:02 hrs. from port to starboard, the HMS Curacoa went under the stem of the Queen, the impact on the after third of the cruiser splitting it in two.

Damage to the stem of the Queen was confined to forward of the first watertight bulkhead, and it was shored up to prevent failure. Her orders to proceed at speed prevented recovery operations. She sent a message to the destroyers following. After embarking troops at Scotland and receiving a temporary patch, she was ordered to the United States for permanent repairs. Quickly repaired she joined Operation Bolero, the troop buildup for D-day.

Sincerely, Patrick K. Ryan, Kansas City, Missouri
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Please note: Fares, Amenities, Gov’t Fees/Taxes are those in effect at time of publication and are subject to change at anytime.
Back in the 1950s and ’60s, P&O filled its older liners with lots of low-fare passengers,” recalled Geoff Gardner, a regular passenger aboard a number of bygone P&O liners in that era. “There were the 10-pound Brits, who were emigrating to places like Fremantle, Melbourne and Sydney. These were usually on six-week voyages down from London or Southampton. But P&O also carried other migrants – Italians and Greeks [boarding at Naples and Piraeus] – and cabins were allocated just for them. Some Brits were actually upset because they couldn’t get a berth on a P&O ship and so [they] had to come out to Australia on Italian or Greek ships, which they felt were inferior. P&O also had a large Australian tourist business back in those days. It was a rite of passage for young Australians to start work, then receive a six-month leave and visit Britain and Europe. The great cultural link between Australia and England was still very, very strong. For many, it was ancestral roots.

The decoratively innovative Orion – a new look both inside and out for the Orient Line in 1935. – Mick Lindsay Collection.
The Strathaird, completed in 1931, berthed at Melbourne. – Mick Lindsay Collection.
An Enduring Slogan

“Run away to sea!” – could evoke visions of long, lazy days on P&O-Orient liners...
... or perhaps in younger passengers, the romance of the sailor’s life. – Chase Poster Collection, SSHSA Archives.
Virtual Infernos

“Myself, I was an Australian citizen and a British subject. I well remember some of the older P&O liners used in all-one-class migrant service. I’d see them berthed at Sydney. The Orontes was the eldest, being commissioned back in 1929. She was classic looking – with two pencil-like funnels and a black hull. To me, she seemed very grand on the inside, even in her later, reduced-fare days. The dining room still had frescoes and wall decorations. It was actually quite palatial for the Aussie run.

“Those old liners weren’t air-conditioned and were virtual infernos, especially in the Red Sea and crossing the Indian Ocean. A crewman told me that when the ships were anchored at Aden, young crew members would dive off the bow and have a cooling swim.”

Among others, older liners, Geoff remembered: “The Stratheden, dating from 1937, was a great favorite of mine. She had an especially tall single funnel and this gave her added good looks. The Orion from 1935 was decoratively revolutionary in her time. She was the first ‘real’ Art Deco liner on the Australian run. That design hadn’t been heard of in Australia back in the ’30s. She was actually considered ultra-modern for her time. Even to the end of her days, it seemed that everything about her fitted into place and was all very functional. In the ‘60s, many preferred older liners like the Orion and Stratheden to the then-new-age of the Canberra and Oriana.

A New Generation

“P&O built a new generation of bigger, larger, better-equipped liners just after the Second World War. These ships were purposely intended for the Aussie run – regular ‘line voyages’ from London or Southampton to Gibraltar, Marseilles, the Suez Canal, Aden, Colombo, Fremantle, Melbourne and Sydney. The Himalaya of 1948 was a direct descendant of the Strath class of the 1930s and especially the Stratheden of 1937. Clearly, some of the same blueprints were used. The Chusan was very similar to the Himalaya, but slightly smaller and therefore more intimate in feel. Although designed especially for the U.K.-Far East run, she later made many, many trips to Australia. To Aussies, she had an added personality – she was P&O’s ‘different ship.’

“The Arcadia and Iberia were the big sensations of the mid-1950s. They were a step up and even looked right, like proper ships. But in Australia, the Arcadia was always more popular. She had the better onboard feel, it was said. It was also said that she always had the better crew as well. The Iberia was somehow never quite right, never
The veteran Orontes of 1929 waiting in London’s Tilbury Docks for her final voyage to Spanish shipbreakers. The date is 1962. – Mick Lindsay Collection.

The handsome Stratheden being docked at London. – Mick Lindsay Collection.
Some said the Chusan was P&O’s best-run ship. Built in 1950 for the company’s India and Far East service, she carried passengers between London, Bombay and Japan, and in the 1960s, Sydney, Australia as well. She was scrapped in Taiwan in 1973. – Braun Bros. Collection, SSHSA Archives.

The 1951-built Oronsay gets a touch-up at her San Francisco berth. – Mick Lindsay Collection.

Before heading back to sea on another P&O-Orient voyage, the 1,406-passenger Iberia loads at Sydney’s Pyrmont Docks. – Tim Noble Collection.
worked quite as well and also had many mechanical problems.”

**At Its Peak**, P&O liners touched on over 100 ports in all. Beginning in 1954, line voyages began to serve the North American West Coast – to Vancouver, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Soon it expanded to a worldwide trade. Business boomed, for passengers as well as some high-grade freight and the all-important mails, especially on the Australian trade, so newer, bigger ships were almost continuously the order of the day. Trading was also heavily sparked by a brisk business with mostly post-war British immigrants, including full families, who were then seeking new lives in opportunity-rich Australia. “Life Down Under” seemed to be like a paradise. In some years – in the 1950s and into the ’60s – as many as 100,000 Brits headed for Australian shores and new lives. That vast continent beckoned as so-called “New Australia.”

**Something Special**

**P&O had its fair share of loyal passengers.** “Those post-war liners were all wonderful ships, but for me, the Arcadia had something special about her,” remembered frequent passenger Howard Franklin. “She had the most wonderful library with club chairs. You could just curl up and read a good book. P&O ships differed, I felt, from their close rivals, the big liners of the Orient Line, which was also British. Myself, I actually preferred the Orient Line. P&O was more equalitarian. There was less aristocracy in first class, for example. Orient Line ships felt like big country houses gone to sea while P&O liners were more hotels at sea. Orient Line also had better food and impeccable service in first class, which altogether was superior to P&O. But altogether, P&O was a very fine company with superb, British-flagged liners. Sadly, we will never again see the likes of them.”

**The Great Historic P&O Lines**, one of the most illustrious shipping lines of all, is still sailing today. But it’s now the Carnival Corporation-owned P&O Cruises, and is much changed. 💐

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**About the Author**

**Bill Miller**, an SSHSA board member, is an international authority on ocean liners and cruise ships. He has written more than 100 books on the subject: from early steamers, immigrant ships and liners at war to their fabulous interiors and about the artifacts from them. He has written histories of such celebrated passenger ships as the United States, Queen Mary, Rotterdam, France, Queen Elizabeth 2 and Crystal Serenity. A native of Hoboken, New Jersey, Miller 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. He was the 2017 recipient of SSHSA’s Samuel Ward Stanton Award for Lifetime Achievement.
Nieuw Amsterdam
GREATEST PASSENGER SHIP
The opening scene from the 1954 Oscar-winning movie On the Waterfront treats the viewer to another winner – the Nieuw Amsterdam (II) berthed boldy at her Hoboken, New Jersey, pier. It seems a fitting backdrop, with the ship in her prime, just six years after a thorough refurbishment. The actors never realized they plied their craft in the shadow of greatness.

For the last 50 years, this author has experienced countless books, articles, presentations and conversations regarding the best passenger liners. Today, the debate is over, no need to squabble any longer – the Nieuw Amsterdam of 1938 deserves the title of the best. Sure, there have been more-famous, and infamous, ships, but none have eclipsed the totality of attributes that make the Holland America liner so outstanding.

What makes the best passenger ship? Size, speed, style, design, architecture, profitability, engineering achievement, standard of service, cuisine? What about heroism, decorations, longevity, reverence from country, passengers and crew? She encompassed all of these and more. The Nieuw Amsterdam wasn’t the largest or fastest, or even the most expensively built or decorated. But this ship blended all of the attributes above like no other. She proved special in virtually every category by which the greatest ships are judged.

This ship has always been underrated, sometimes surprisingly so. Her name appears only once in the 425-page classic book The Only Way to Cross, by John Maxtone-Graham. Great Liners at War, by Stephen Harding, doesn’t specifically mention Nieuw Amsterdam except in a photo caption. Sail, Steam and Splendour, by Byron Miller, doesn’t list Nieuw Amsterdam as one of the “Great Liners” in the addenda. What have all these “experts” missed? And why? PowerShips will fill in the blanks.

Holland on the Seas

It’s no surprise that Holland would produce such a magnificent ship. Holland has seafaring traditions that belie the size of the country. A comparison with states in the United States would place the Netherlands 42nd in size, just above Maryland; the country would fit into the island of Hispaniola. The Netherlands is wedded to the sea with a legendary heritage going back centuries. Over one fourth of the country is below sea level, and it has been holding back the ocean for over 1,000 years. In the 16th century, the best treatise on shipbuilding came from Dutch writings, based on skills and knowledge handed down over generations. By 1600, over half of all ships afloat were of Dutch design, outdoing England and the Baltic countries.

Dutch explorers also had their fair share of discoveries. Their first settlement in the West Indies came about in 1602, before the founding of Jamestown. Tasman is heralded as the first European to set eyes on New Zealand and Australia in 1644; he thoroughly explored the coasts of Australia. The Dutch East Indies firm was founded in 1655. Even before Tasman, the first Dutch settlement in North America was founded in 1612, two years after the Dutch-built Half Moon ventured north on what’s now the Hudson River looking for a northwest passage. By 1624, the Dutch had founded Nieuw Amsterdam on the island of Manhattan. The city grew and remained in Dutch control until the British took it over in 1664.
Passengers throw streamers from the decks of Holland America liner Nieuw Amsterdam at Pier 40 in New York in 1970. – Braun Bros. Collection, SSHSA Archives.

Holland America Line's Nieuw Amsterdam sailing from New York in 1970, assisted by a Moran tug. – Braun Bros. Collection, SSHSA Archives.
Dutch Military Victories

**Even beyond the commercial aspects, Dutch supremacy at sea cannot be discounted.** The Naval Institute published a book calling out the 19 greatest admirals in world history. Two Dutch admirals are on the list – De Ruyter and Tromp, the two best of the three so designated in the entire 17th century. Tromp has been granted the title “the father of Naval tactics,” 120 years before Admiral Horatio Nelson. The term “clean sweep” refers to the legend of the broom lashed to the mast; after the overwhelming victory of Tromp over the British in 1676, he “swept the English off the seas.” In 1639, Tromp attained a decisive victory with 17 ships against a Spanish armada of 75 ships, 45 of which had warship classifications, carrying 14,000 troops. Nine years later, in 1648, The Netherlands claimed independence. At the height of its power, the Netherlands had colonial holdings of 800,000 square miles, 60 times the country’s size.

De Ruyter (1607–1676), in a career of 20 battles and wars, inflicted the worst defeat recorded against the British Royal Navy during the 1667 Raid on the Medway. Sailing up a Thames estuary into the Medway River, he destroyed 13 British ships and captured the flagship HMS *Royal Charles*, losing just 50 men. The loss proved a disaster for King Charles and brought a rapid end to the Second Anglo-Dutch War.

Readers may derogate these events as belonging to the past, but the skills of Dutch master mariners at war and commercial endeavors have been handed down, and none finer exist in the world. This great heritage has direct links to those building and operating the *Nieuw Amsterdam*.

The Beginnings of Holland America

On the European continent, less than 10 years after the founding of North German Lloyd, Dutch investors formed the Royal Dutch Steamship Company (KNM). It became an instant success. Other continental steamship companies had a desire to compete with Dutch skills in finance, capital and seamanship, but the attempts to put KNM out of business failed. The depth of the river and waterways restricted reach into the North Sea, but by 1873, the Netherlands America Steamship Company (NASM) was formed as an outgrowth of KNM. The motto became “Finally a sprig becomes a tree.” By 1880, passenger bookings increased to an extent that necessitated the chartering of two additional ships. While the press obsessed over speed, size and Blue Riband, Holland America set standards for cleanliness, smooth operation and impeccable service.

By 1914, Holland America was poised to bring a grand flagship into its fleet. Her name was *Statendam*, but the ship never sailed under Dutch colors. While she was under construction at Harland and Wolff in Ireland, the British appropriated her and renamed her *Justinia*. At the time of her completion, she became the sixth largest ship in the world. A German U-boat sank her in 1918. As compensation, 60,000 tons of steel went to Holland. This material was used to construct four smaller passenger ships and 10 freighter types of the “B” and “G” classes.

A grand replacement for the earlier *Statendam* appeared in New York on her maiden voyage, on April 20, 1929. The only three-funnel ship ever sailing for Holland America, the new *Statendam* (II), after eight years of building, seemed somewhat dated with her high stacks and baroque interiors. Designers of ships had changed the look in the decade after World
Smokestack on Holland America Line’s Nieuw Amsterdam in New York. – Braun Bros. Collection, SSHSA Archives.
War I. A new crop of great ships, such as Bremen, Europa and Ille de France, also appeared in the 1927–1930 period. The 1920–1930 decade saw further advances in technology, style and décor. Holland America would soon see the need for a new, fresh running mate for the Statendam.

Holland America showed panache when ordering the Nieuw Amsterdam (II) during the depression in 1935. A virtual mandate dictated that the new ship be constructed in Holland. Up until that juncture, except for some smaller liners built in the 19th century, the major Holland America ships had been constructed in the United Kingdom, mainly Ireland: Statendam (I) at 765 feet; sisters Volendam and Veendam, 575 feet long, and Statendam (II) with a length of 697 feet, had all been constructed at Harland and Wolff, primarily because of shipyard size and slipway length. Harland & Wolff wanted the contract for the new ship, then scheduled to be named Prinsdam, also called “ship of tomorrow” and “ship of peace.” She had no military application. Her model at the 1939 New York World's fair received the most attention at the fair’s Dutch pavilion.

Building a Flagship

Admant That any new ship be constructed in the country, the Dutch government agreed to a special low-rate loan with slow payback. Holland America had always been reluctant to have such government involvement, and suffer the consequent meddling, but it made an exception. In addition, the shipyard workers union agreed to a 2.5-percent reduction in wages. When they ordered the new flagship, officials had little anticipation that she would make much money. It was more important that the flagship would be an example of Dutch exceptionalism, skills and engineering expertise. But Nieuw Amsterdam proved a big money-maker for Holland America, without subsidies, unlike the two Queens, Normandie and other “ships of state.”

Rotterdam Drydock easily won the 1935 bid to construct the flagship. (Another competitor, Wilton-Fijenoord, which had completed Statendam six years earlier after her launching in Ireland, had to include the price of shipyard modifications in order to allow for the construction.) The price, approximately 11 million guilders, less than $20 million U.S., seemed almost too low. Founded in 1902, Rotterdam Drydock had the best facilities and largest employment of all the Dutch shipyards. Dutch shipbuilding increased for three decades. Even 20 years after beginning the Holland America flagship, the Netherlands ranked fifth of 25 countries worldwide in gross tonnage completed.

Rotterdam Drydock assigned hull number 200 to the project and laid the keel on January 3, 1936. Despite the depression, work progressed smoothly and launch came on April 10, 1937. Queen Wilhelmina presided over the glorious event and christened the ship, which then moved to the Wilton-Fijenoord yard at Schiedam (site of the building of the
Ladies in Bonwit Teller gowns—and their escorts—descend the staircase from the Ritz-Carlton Café.

The air-conditioned 350-seat First Class Theatre.

A First Class舱内豪华。

Like the Grand Hall, the First Class Dining Salon included an orchestra balcony.
n An outside Cabin Class stateroom.

n The Stuyvesant Café adjoined an aft-facing verandah.

n The Cabin Class Lounge also adjoined two “sea-view” verandahs.

n The Cabin Class Jungle Bar.

n Cabin and Tourist classes shared a 166-seat Theatre.

n The Tourist Class Dining Room.

n An outside Tourist Class stateroom.

n The Tourist Class bar, colored in canary yellow and buff.
1957 Statendam] for work in the floating dock; then it was back to Rotterdam for the finishing details. Sea trials commenced a year later in April 1938 and ran four days. Guests included ambassadors from Britain, France and even Germany. (This was just one year before the assault on Poland that began World War II).

Nieuw Amsterdam had been planned from the keel up to employ the highest standards of fireproofing and safety. Designers had 12 watertight bulkheads below A deck with 48 hydraulic-controlled doors. The 3,600 sprinkler heads had automatic alarms. The fire hoses exceeded the length of the ship by eight times. The fire room had triple protection: carbon dioxide smothering, foamite, and steam smothering. Cargo spaces were also protected by carbon dioxide smothering. The 1952 United States employed Dutch innovations in her highly vaunted fire protection system.

For the first time on the Atlantic, the entire lifeboat complement had aluminum alloy construction. Weight savings amounted to 1,500 tons, which helped stability. The boats could be mounted high on the upper promenade, keeping the main promenade clear for games and deck chairs. Lifeboat capacity exceeded the number of passengers and crew by five percent. Magnesia insulation protected passengers from heat, but also kept the air-conditioned spaces cooler and helped reduce the noise between the metal cabin bulkheads and machinery. Those staying overnight on Queen Mary will quickly realize the importance of insulation to attenuate disruptions between staterooms.

Competitive Dimensions

The 1938 Nieuw Amsterdam became the largest ship ever built in Holland. At 759 feet in length with a beam of 88 feet, she is also recorded as the largest twin-screw, commercial ship in the world. Lloyd's registered the ship at 36,287 tons gross and 21,496 tons net. The net tonnage is the total volume of a ship able to make a profit – the space for paying passengers and cargo.

The net tonnage of several ships whose gross tonnage far exceeds Holland American's flagship, such as Berengaria (21,350) and Aquitania (20,800) are similar to that of Nieuw Amsterdam (21,496). And Aquitania and Berengaria each measured over 900 feet in length. Nieuw Amsterdam had less than half the gross tonnage of the Normandie or Queen Mary, yet she carried nearly 65 percent of the total passengers as Normandie and 75 percent of the first-class passengers as the Queen Mary. And despite boasting nearly two-thirds the passenger capacity, Nieuw Amsterdam had only half the crew.

And let's not forget the cargo capacity of 238,000 cubic feet on the Nieuw Amsterdam, more than even the standard Maritime Commission C1-M cargo ship, and a third more than Queen Mary. That makes for a lot of Heineken. And the Dutch ship boasted over 17,000 cubic feet of insulated cargo space for perishable foods. This is over half the reefer capacity of the United States Lines' Pioneer Mist, a large, Ingalls-built, Mariner-class cargo ship. Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth? Zero insulated space for commercial purposes. All of the extra cargo capability on Nieuw Amsterdam proved advantageous during allied troop movements.

Advanced Engineering

Nieuw Amsterdam's average speed at sea trials measured a round figure of 23 knots, with no overrating to the 34,000-hp turbines; an emergency 10-percent short-term overrating on all six boilers could add another knot. The 19/20-knot cruising speed would be easily maintained with just five of the six boilers. Her maiden voyage to New York City took place on May 10, 1938, and took just under six days. Her maximum speed matched Titanic. Lusitania took the Blue Riband from Germany at 23.99 knots. Leviathan set a world speed record at her trials in 1923 with just a two-knot advantage.

The revolutionary power plant below decks on Nieuw Amsterdam showed superb technology, besting the major Atlantic competition by a wide margin. Dutch engineers designed and constructed a propulsion system of immense efficiency and reliability, with a boiler pressure of 630 pounds per square inch, at a temperature of 750 degrees Fahrenheit. Queen Mary had steam pressure of barely 440, Bremen was 360, Rex was 375 and Normandie was a meager 425. The powerful U.S Navy 33-knot battleships and cruisers were 575 psi at turbine inlet.

Nieuw Amsterdam could maintain her cruising speed with only five boilers, with less than half the displacement. Vaterland/Leviathan needed 46 boilers, Queen Mary had 24 main boilers, Aquitania carried 21, Normandie 25, and Majestic an astonishing 48. The highly regarded Ille de France, 43,150 gross tons, carried a power-plant that was obsolete and inefficient even as her construction began. Ten years after the famed French liner went to sea, Nieuw Amsterdam had leapfrogged into the future – just six boilers instead of 20, with steam pressure nearly three times that of her competitor.

The higher boiler pressure surpassed mid-1930s turbine efficiency, allowing for quadruple expansion instead of the normal triple. Dutch engineers, armed with advanced metallurgy in turbine blading, valving and steam-sealing systems, added a super high-pressure turbine to the double reduction gearing system. Steam entered the first stage at nearly 620 psi and expanded steam energy twice more, and, expanding again, entered the final fourth stage at 98 psi. Engineers equalized the forces against the superbly machined gearing as super hp pinion delivering 3,450 hp, hp gearing rated at 5,500; immediate pressure added 2,150, and low pressure, 6,050. Dutch engineers advanced marine engineering by manufacturing a better insulating material against the 750-degree heat. This protected the watch standers from excessively high temperature in the machinery spaces and further improved steam plant efficiency. The efficient power plant made for less volume dedicated to machinery, improving
SS Nieuw Amsterdam, sometime between 1940 and 1942. – Dutch National Archives.

View of funnels and upper decks of the Nieuw Amsterdam at Pier 40 in New York in 1968. – Braun Bros. Collection, SSHSA Archives.
the tonnage figures, delineated above, against the overall smaller size. The high steam pressure also made the turbo generator electrical plant more compact.

The Dutch employed a novel approach to auxiliary steam on the Nieuw Amsterdam. Instead of so many valves, reducing systems and extra piping, the auxiliary steam pressure was bled off the steam turbine intakes. With several different pressures, 140, 85, and 60 available, auxiliary boilers had no use at sea. These auxiliary steam pressures provided for engineering aspects such as fuel tank heating, feed heating and all hotel services.

A donkey boiler did provide hotel services during an off-line power plant. Two Dutch-built, Werkspoor, 425-kW diesel generating sets provided import electrical power and auxiliary power at sea. The after funnel, a dummy for engine room ventilation, also had two smaller electrical generating sets, providing emergency electrical power. Power plant efficiency for all purposes had a .61 lb/shp/hr rating, a highly respectable figure considering the bleed steam to hotel service.

It would take 14 years and the heavily subsidized United States power plant to again impress the propulsion engineers. Twenty-five years after the Netherlands put propulsion engineering on display at sea, notable ships such as Brasil, Saxonia and Olympia were still being operated with less boiler pressure than Nieuw Amsterdam. Holland America planned even better steam plant performance for an Atlantic running mate, but the Depression and the onset of hostilities precluded the construction.

Instead of a near-sister ship, the line built four high-quality, moderate-sized combination passenger ships – Noordam and Zaandam, planned on a New York run, plus Westerdam and Zuiderdam for the Pacific Coast. A Nieuw Amsterdam running mate didn’t appear until the 1959 Rotterdam, which became the new Holland America flagship. Similarly sized, she received praise and is considered very attractive in a different way from the 20-year-old flagship.

Across the Atlantic, the U.S. Maritime industry took notice of the 1938 Holland America ship. Admiral Land and the Maritime Commission were so impressed that they immediately planned an American version to be built in a pair, as part of the planned 500-ship revitalization of the Merchant Marine. The ship would have two funnels, be 35,000 tons, the same length and beam, fire safe, three pools, twin screw, with passenger capacity equivalents. Still, the power plant would have beensubstandard to that of the Dutch ship. A proposal led to the design of the P4-S2-41 North Atlantic route trio of ships. These American sisters were dropped during the war, and major passenger ship efforts went later into the United States project. The America (P4-S2-1) did become the first ship ordered in the United States Maritime Commission bridge of ships (USMC hull #1), and while well executed, her credentials fell considerablyshort of Nieuw Amsterdam in virtually all respects.

The SS Nieuw Amsterdam was employed for troop transport during World War II. Shown here are the pursers in 1944. – Dutch National Archives.

Masterful Interiors

The Nieuw Amsterdam interiors, art and decorations were the equal of any ship afloat. Nieuw Amsterdam carried an international clientele consisting mostly of Europeans and Americans. This necessitated a European flair, rather than just Dutch influence, throughout the cabins and 22 public rooms. Details included light switches, cabinet hardware and door handles, exemplified by the heavy brass mermaids on the Cabin-class smoking room. Over 60 Dutch artisans, painters, metalsmiths, sculptors, architects and fine woodworkers contributed.

Nieuw Amsterdam’s interiors were a combination of art deco and Dutch Modern, but a modern look permeated overall, coinciding with the nickname “ship of tomorrow.” Some of the public rooms are well remembered: Grand Hall, Champlain Dining Room, Jungle Bar and Tourist Class Bar, swimming pool, children’s playroom, the Ritz Carlton and smoking rooms.

The Champlain Dining Room had more of an art deco influence. It was two decks high and intimate; postwar travelers called it the most comfortable afloat. At building, she became the only liner boasting escalators from the kitchen. Pillars in the dining room had solid gold leaf coverings. Murano crystal and lighting fixtures graced the diners.

Reflective of her namesake heritage, large oil paintings of New York City graced the walls, and a silver model of the Half Moon stood at the bottom of the Grand Staircase. Pastoral scenes on the dining room bulkheads consisted of Vermurail,
a process patented by Joef Nicolas. His ethereal designs were traced onto glass with metallic oxides. The exquisite first-class stairway gleamed in ebony with bronze railings.

The Grand Hall featured sculptures by John Raedecker. Murals on the fore and aft bulkheads were by Gerard Roling. The United States contributed lovely stainless-steel doors, opening to the Grand Hall. An orchestra platform sat high above the floor.

Henk Chabot contributed paintings in the reception hall and captain’s cabin. In March 1940, Holland America unveiled his bronze statue Nude with Flowers on the stairs in the departure hall. Regrettably, in the haste to remake Nieuw Amsterdam into a troop ship, the statue disappeared. A bronze panel called the Four Seasons in the main reception vestibule was by Jan and Leo Brom; it later appeared on the 1997 Amsterdam.

What made Nieuw Amsterdam most special is the considerable attention given to second class (tourist class in 1938) and third class (tourist class, postwar). These travelers enjoyed the influence of the Dutch masters with a usually modernist style without deco influence. The second-class lounge showcased a study in De Stijl style. The domed second-class dining room could have passed for first class in lesser ships.

The tourist-class lounge featured floor-to-ceiling round windows with leaded glass, done by J. J. Oud, the city architect of Rotterdam. The decorator Frits Spanjaard worked with Oud (and others) on the decorative designs, especially the furniture. The third-class writing room/library and tourist-class bar were attributed to him. The temperature of all three Delft-tiled pools was kept at 80 degrees, matching the summer water temperature at Waikiki Beach.

Nieuw Amsterdam at War

During World War I, the Netherlands declared neutrality and the declaration was honored by the axis powers. It would be different for the next war. Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. En route to New York, Holland America kept Nieuw Amsterdam on the high seas, diverting the ship to the Caribbean. It soon became apparent that the war wouldn’t end quickly. The Netherlands’ claim of neutrality held no sway and Germany entered the country in May 1940.

Soon Holland America’s famed ship went to the Todd shipyard in New York to receive a coat of gray paint; then she was secretly dispatched to Halifax for troop conversion. Converting the capacity from 1,400 passengers to 8,500 troops required a lot of change. Each of the deluxe staterooms berthed 22 officers, the Grand Hall slept 600 troops and the pool had bunks four high for 64 men.

The armament amounted to 36 guns, mostly smaller caliber. The main battery consisted of a British 6-inch gun (light cruiser size – 152mm) and four 4-inch guns (destroyer escort size – 102mm) with anti-aircraft capability. The Swiss Oerlikon 20mm guns also provided some anti-aircraft defense. This is an impressive array and compares favorably with the Fletcher-type destroyer, a workhorse for the U.S. Navy, which mounted five 5-inch (127mm) guns. Queen Mary had just a single 4-inch gun in addition to the smaller 76mm, 40mm and 20mm guns.
**Nieuw Amsterdam** had less interior space and accordingly a smaller troop capacity than the two Queens. She ultimately became known as part of the “monster six” troop carriers, the other five being Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, Ille de France, Aquitania and Mauretania (II). She began carrying troops immediately out of Halifax even though she didn’t reach full capacity until she arrived in Singapore in October 1940. When she was gutted to make more space for troops, unfortunately, many of her superb furnishings were left on the pier to succumb to the rain and humidity. It seemed more important to get her back in action.

The Dutch ship, then managed by Cunard-White Star, operated with a Dutch crew and Dutch flag. The HMT Nieuw Amsterdam enjoyed several advantages over the largest trooping ships. She used much less fuel, reducing the need for bunkering, and her smaller size made more ports accessible. Her shallower draft eased channel work and demands on pier facilities. The Allies considered her 20-knot cruising speed enough that she could work on her own, staying out of the 10- or 15-knot convoys. And she didn’t have the $250,000/Iron Cross price on her mast.

After hostilities ended, Nieuw Amsterdam continued her war career by moving troops. The numbers are hard to verify, but references indicate that the Nieuw Amsterdam carried the highest trooping average per voyage.

She carried a total of 378,000 personnel, the third most during the war. She steamed 530,450 miles, the second most; this equates to 180 Atlantic crossings. In addition to troops, she embarked nurses, diplomats, prisoners, wounded and even deceased. She took the Greek royal family through the Suez Canal for exile in South Africa.

A Return to Greatness

**Nieuw Amsterdam returned home on April 10, 1946,** exactly 10 years after her launch in 1936. War-torn and rust-streaked, but with the funnels showing the Holland America buff stacks with green/white/green bands, she steamed slowly down the Maas into Rotterdam. Her return was designated a national holiday, and it’s estimated that over 10 percent of the country turned out for a hero’s welcome. Shops and schools closed. Even the stormy clouds parted and sun shone on the event.

It took 14 months and 85 percent of the original building price to restore the ship and her fittings. The refurbishment proved more difficult than that of comparable ships because her superb furnishings had been left in the rain. The restoration was immense – 3,000 chairs reupholstered, 12,000 feet of glass replaced, 2,700 square feet of teak decking renewed. She returned to transatlantic service in October 1947.

**Nieuw Amsterdam** easily picked up where she left off, often being fully booked. Her passengers included Katherine Hepburn, Spencer Tracey, Albert Schweitzer, King Leopold of Belgium, Debbie Reynolds, James Garner, Deborah Kerr, Cardinal Cushing, Bob Hope, Virginia Mayo, Thornton Wilder, Frederick March, Tyrone Power, Paulette Goddard, Al Capp, George Raft, Robert Oppenheimer, Rita Hayworth, Van Hefflin, Clark Gable and the Andrew sisters. Jane Russel made World War II spots on the ship for the “A Slip of the Lip May Sink A Ship” campaign, and the Nieuw Amsterdam remained her favorite for the remainder of the ship’s career. When George Gallup sailed on her, his unofficial poll concluded that she was the most respected ship on the high seas.

Top-Ranked Dining Experience

**Even the most discriminating gourmands found the dining experience on Nieuw Amsterdam without peer.** Her kitchens became the first at sea to be initiated into Chaine des Rotisseurs, the international gastronomic society founded in Paris.

The Modern Kitchen used electricity for cooking, except for the grills. Normal dinners consisted of 10 courses, but 12-course meals were not infrequent. The lower two classes shared the same provisions as first, albeit with less attention to detail. Even wartime cruising didn’t keep the Dutch staff from meeting the expectations of 8,000 soldiers heading to the front. At Christmas, every serviceman had a turkey dinner with all the trimmings and ice cream, which took four days of preparation. The officers enjoyed caviar and champagne as the ship headed to the next war zone.

In the immediate post-war era, Nieuw Amsterdam had full bookings. A transatlantic passage on the great ship could be had for $300 in first class, $230 in cabin and $190 in tourist class. She was extensively refurbished over the winter of 1956 to 1957.
Air conditioning made it to the cabins, which also had upgrades. Her hull was repainted dove gray, the same as the other Holland America passenger ships. The new color mitigated the heat load on outside cabins when the ship cruised in the Caribbean sun.

In 1959, the new Rotterdam became Holland America’s flagship, a fine-looking ship with slightly larger dimensions. Two years later, Nieuw Amsterdam eliminated cabin class and became a flexible two-class ship – 301 in first class and 972 in tourist, or 691 in first class and 583 in tourist.

By 1967, 30 years after launching, she showed signs of aging. Problems in the fireroom indicated a need for boiler replacements. Exact replacements were unavailable, but officials located American Navy heavy cruiser boilers with low mileage or from storage. While the steam pressure registered lower than the original boilers, the volume of steam kept the ship using just five boilers. The Navy boilers weighed less, and the original sixth boiler remained aboard for ballast. Wilton-Fijenoord performed the transplant, giving the ship another six years.

Nieuw Amsterdam’s Career Ends
Ironically, the oldest ship in the Holland America fleet closed down the North Atlantic run in 1971. Cruises to the Caribbean were heavily advertised. A poster showed Nieuw Amsterdam against a New York skyline background, with a foreground image of the World’s Fair’s dramatic Trylon and Perisphere. The Caribbean cruise boasted back to the future, an era of “absolute grandeur amid shimmering mirrors, gleaming bronze and brass, warm woods and rich textures . . . The Versailles of vessels.”

Brochures touted “24-hour service and NO gratuities!” Some of the cheaper cabins had never been upgraded to private facilities and these inside cabins could be had for as little as $195 each, off season, for eight days. First-class outside deluxe staterooms commanded $900 each for two. Many took advantage of this opportunity to relive the heyday of the grandest liner afloat.

A sad Christmas card for Nieuw Amsterdam came in 1973. By January, her years of service were over. With a skeleton crew of just 80, she left Port Everglades and headed west under her own power. After refueling at Dutch Curacao and transiting the canal, the ship moored at Los Angeles to top off and remove some Holland America items for shipment to offices in Rotterdam. After crossing the Pacific at 12 knots, she arrived in Kaohsing, Taiwan.

The crew still considered the ship their own and wined as tugs, not so gently, nudged her next to Homerica for scrapping. The pilot didn’t appreciate the 1938 ship – after all, in a few weeks she would be gone. And she was, but not in the hearts of enthusiasts. The author located the ship during a visit to Taiwan in 1974, still in disbelief that the great ship hadn’t been saved.

Legacy
Today, 80 years since the maiden voyage of Nieuw Amsterdam, the liner remains remarkable in all respects – dramatic interiors and art of the best in Dutch traditions, innovative design, meticulous details and advanced engineering. She was profitable from the earliest voyage and lasted for 36 years. Service on any route maintained the highest standards. The skills of the bridge officers, engineers and mariners paid homage to centuries of Dutch seamanship.

Nieuw Amsterdam’s contributions to the war effort belied the minute size of her country of origin. She’s remembered as a masterpiece from the country known for maritime heritage. The 1938 Nieuw Amsterdam had no peer, she followed in the wake of none.

The QE2 Story and Website
The place to be for all things QE2

The QE2 Story, launched in January 2009, has accumulated extensive primary sources and the recollections of many with connections to QE2.

Members of the Forum include those who built her; captains, engineers, and othes who worked aboard; those who travelled on her; and those who viewed her from afar.

Membership in The Forum is free.
Please join us.
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The Mayflower is known best for the role it played in the negotiations to end the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. President Theodore Roosevelt hosted Russian and Japanese government officials onboard the vessel to negotiate the peace treaty.

Mayflower was a presidential yacht, beginning in 1905 for Theodore Roosevelt, and continuing its service under William Howard Taft (1909–1913), Woodrow Wilson (1913–1921), Warren G. Harding (1921–1923) and Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929). The Mayflower’s service as a presidential yacht ended within 30 days of Herbert Hoover’s inauguration – it was sold as an economy measure. The USS Sylph was also a designated presidential yacht from 1902 to 1929.

Mayflower was the largest presidential yacht and, arguably, the most luxurious. No expense was spared in its costly original construction in 1897. However, the original owner died soon after taking the yacht on its maiden voyage and, as a result, didn’t derive the enjoyment of ownership that he undoubtedly expected. His estate sold the yacht to the U.S. government and the vessel embarked on its noteworthy service to the nation.

The vessel was purchased by the United States Navy and was recognized for distinguished service during the Spanish-American War and its aftermath, patrolling mostly in Caribbean waters. After serving in the Navy and then as a presidential yacht, it experienced an unfortunate period in private ownership. Then the War Shipping Administration purchased the yacht and assigned it to the United States Coast Guard for service during World War II. Upon completion of its distinguished Coast Guard service, the vessel returned to private ownership before being acquired by Israel for its navy.
The Birth of a Ship

Ogdens Goelet, born June 11, 1851, commissioned G. L. Watson to design a steam yacht to be named Mayflower, and J. and G. Thomson, located in Clydebank, Scotland, built it. (Ogdens brother Robert had an identical yacht designed and made at the same time by Watson and the Thomson brothers.) Goelet, a wealthy New York City real estate developer, was a member of high society; he belonged to the New York Yacht Club for 17 years, as well as the Knickerbocker Club, Metropolitan Club and Union Club. J. and G. Thomson was a well-established firm founded in 1845 as an engineering works operation; the company opened its shipyard in 1851 at Cessnock.

Ogdens died onboard his yacht while at Cowes, Isle of Wight, on August 27, 1897, after a two-month illness. The U.S. Navy purchased the yacht from the Goelet estate for $430,000 ($13,270,059 in 2019 dollars) – a third of the ship’s construction cost – to increase its fleet and counter the Spanish fleet around Cuba. The vessel was commissioned USS Mayflower (PY-1) on March 24, 1898, at the New York Navy Yard (which later became known as the Brooklyn Navy Yard). Commander M. R. S. McKensie was appointed to command the vessel.

United States Navy Service

The Mayflower was a formidable patrol yacht, which is apparent from the specifications upon its commissioning by the U.S. Navy. The vessel contributed mightily to the American war effort against the Spanish as the 19th century came to a close. It was assigned to the squadron commanded by Admiral T. Sampson at Key West, Florida. On April 22, 1898, two days after joining the squadron, the Mayflower sailed to Havana to set up a blockade. Commander McKensie led his crew to capture the Santiago Apostol, a Spanish schooner, as well as fishing boats and coastal trading craft. On May 11, the crew boarded a blockade runner, the British merchant ship of the same name, Mayflower. A prize crew was formed to sail the captured Mayflower to America.

Three days later, the USS Mayflower engaged and repelled three Spanish warships, Alfonso and two gunboats, that tried to break the blockade. The Spanish ships broke off the engagement and returned to safety at Morrow Castle. Mayflower’s assignment with the squadron continued to the end of the war, during which time it guarded the port cities of Santiago de Cuba and Cienfuegos.

Commander McKensie and the crew were recognized for their service with the West Indies Naval Campaign Medal (1898), known commonly as the Sampson Medal, and the Spanish Campaign Medal (1898). The act of March 3, 1901, pertaining to the Sampson Medal, provides: “that the Secretary of the Navy be, and he is hereby, authorized to cause to be struck bronze medals commemorative of the naval and other engagements in the waters of the West Indies and on the shores of Cuba during the War with Spain, and to distribute the same to the officers and men of the Navy and Marine Corps who participate in any of said engagements deemed by him of sufficient importance to deserve commemoration.” The commemorative medal was issued to members of the Navy and Marine Corps who took part in West Indies naval operations from April 27 to August 14, 1898. Established on June 27, 1908, the Navy and Marine Corps versions of the Spanish Campaign Medal honor personnel in those branches of the military who carried out active duty in the Spanish-American War between the dates of May 1 and August 16, 1898. The Sampson Medal is pictured on the left; the Spanish Campaign medal on the right.

Upon completion of its distinguished service in the Spanish-American War, in January 1899, the Mayflower steamed to New York for its next assignment. The ship was decommissioned on February 2 to be prepared for assignment to the waters of Puerto Rico. Commander Duncan Kennedy assumed command on June 13, 1900, when the vessel was recommissioned to serve as the headquarters at San Juan for Charles H. Allen, the first American governor of the island.

The Mayflower continued to serve with distinction in high-profile assignments. On two separate occasions in 1902, the vessel served as the flagship for Admiral Dewey. It continued its historical service as the flagship for Rear Admiral Coghlan in 1903 while stationed off the coast of Panama during the revolution that led to Panamanian independence and, subsequently, the Panama Canal project. The Mayflower experienced three noteworthy events in 1904: a voyage, to Europe from July to October, steaming in the Mediterranean Sea; a full voyage to the West Indies with Secretary of War William Howard Taft conducting an inspection tour; and a voyage to New York for decommissioning on November 1 at the New York Navy Yard, followed by conversion to a presidential yacht.
Presidential Yacht Service

The Mayflower was recommissioned July 25, 1905.

Commander Cameron McRae Winslow, who assisted in the work at the Navy Yard and was the son of a Navy commander, was placed in command on July 25 until he was reassigned on December 19, 1905. Commander Winslow had served previously on the USS Despatch, the presidential yacht from 1880 to 1893. He subsequently rose in rank to rear admiral and served as the commander-in-chief, Pacific Fleet, from September 13, 1915, to July 29, 1916. He retired from the service and was recalled to active duty during World War I.

Upon the Mayflower’s departure from the Navy Yard, the vessel steamed directly to Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York, and the private residence of President Theodore Roosevelt. President Roosevelt hosted the Russian and Japanese government officials onboard the vessel, beginning August 5, for negotiations to end the Russo-Japanese War. (He also used the Mayflower for family cruises on Long Island Sound.) President Roosevelt was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906 for his role in the peace negotiations. After the treaty negotiations, the Mayflower returned to familiar Caribbean waters off the coast of Santo Domingo to protect American interests.

President William Howard Taft had two oversized bathtubs installed on the Mayflower. He accompanied the yacht as it steamed to New York harbor for the Hudson-Fulton Celebration from September 25 to October 9, 1909. During the ceremonies, Henry Hudson’s first voyage on the river to be named after him was commemorated on the 300th anniversary of the event. Also, the 100th anniversary of Robert Fulton’s steamship voyage was celebrated. President Taft also steamed to Provincetown, Massachusetts, on the Mayflower for the dedication of the Pilgrim Monument on August 5, 1910, which was the anniversary of the original Mayflower’s departure for America.
(Above) SS Mayflower in all of her glory, circa 1909. – U.S. Library of Congress photo. (Below) USS Mayflower off Swampscott, Massachusetts, circa 1919-20. At left is a Navy F-5L seaplane that had been placed at the president’s disposal by the Navy Department. – Naval History and Heritage Command photo.
President Woodrow Wilson romanced Mrs. Edith Bolling Galt, soon to be his wife, on the Mayflower in 1915. The Mayflower crew members were awarded the World War I Victory Medal for their service on active duty between April 6, 1917, and November 11, 1918, or if they entered the naval service on or after November 12, 1918, and prior to March 30, 1920. The Victory Medal concept was approved shortly after the World War I armistice was signed. Allied countries awarded the same medal, albeit with some differences representing each country’s national character. The prominent sculptor James Earle Fraser, designer of the buffalo nickel and the Navy Cross, designed the medal. The obverse represents Victory wearing a spiked crown, similar to that on the Statue of Liberty; the reverse has an American shield and the names of 14 Allied and Associated nations. Atop the shield is a fasces.

President Calvin Coolidge was a frequent user of the yacht, and he assigned a Navy Chaplin onboard so he wouldn’t be faulted for missing church services during Sunday morning voyages. President Coolidge spoke often of the enjoyment he derived from cruising on the Mayflower, and he mentioned it at his press conferences. His preferred voyage was a Saturday afternoon round-trip cruise to Quantico; he had dinner with friends on the return leg. President Coolidge steamed to Swampscott, Massachusetts, during 1925 to spend time at his Summer White House of White Court. He used the Mayflower for many cruises along the coast.

One of Herbert Hoover’s early decisions, soon after his inauguration on March 4, 1929, was to sell the Mayflower as an economy measure, saving upkeep costs of $300,000 per year ($4,493,737 in 2019 dollars). The vessel steamed to the Philadelphia Navy Yard, where it was decommissioned on March 22. An auction was held, but no bidders came forward. The Mayflower was recommissioned and work began to prepare the ship for military use. An intense fire occurred on January 24, 1931, resulting in the vessel sinking because of the volume of water pumped onboard. It was raised and work continued to prepare the vessel for military missions.

Post-Presidential Yacht Service

The years just after serving as the presidential yacht weren’t kind to the Mayflower. After witnessing history in the Russo-Japanese War treaty negotiations, various social and diplomatic events, and visits by American and foreign dignitaries, the vessel experienced a series of questionable owners who planned undignified uses for it.

The United States government sold the Mayflower on October 19, 1931, to Leo P. Coe, who represented Frank. P. Parish. Parish, a well-known and wealthy Chicago financier, contracted with Henry J. Gerlow Inc., a New York City firm, to restore the yacht to its original splendid condition. Unfortunately, Parish faced a reversal of his finances, and he sold the yacht just before he left the United States to avoid legal prosecution and angry investors.

During the 1930s, the period of the Great Depression, a series of owners promoted a wide range of uses for the vessel: involvement in the South American coastal trade; restoration as a historical artifact; promotion as a floating dance salon; and salvage to be scrapped by the Japanese government to contribute to that nation’s war effort. If that last plan had been realized, it would have been a tragic end for the illustrious...
yacht and would have reflected poorly on the U.S. government’s decision to discard it. Fortunately, these intended uses failed to reach fruition because of legal complexities, financial considerations and depression-era business issues. The vessel spent considerable time on the east coast in berths from New York City to Jacksonville, Florida.

**Although the future** seemed bleak for the ship, it emerged from this period of the doldrums. The U.S. government needed to support its allies against the German war machine, so on July 31, 1942, the War Shipping Administration purchased the vessel from the Broadfoot Iron Works Inc. of Wilmington, North Carolina.

**Broadfoot, established** by William G. Broadfoot in 1919, enjoyed a national reputation. The company was well acquainted with the Mayflower, having done repairs on the vessel in 1931. Broadfoot continued its relationship with the U.S. government, fabricating propeller shafts for Liberty ships and doing repairs on the presidential yacht Sequoia in 1950. The company ceased operations in 1955.

**The War Shipping Administration** was an agency of the U.S. government, established by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Executive Order No. 9054, on February 7, 1942, under the authority of the First War Powers Act (55 Stat. 838), December 1941. The act enabled the government to acquire and operate merchant vessels and train the crews. The agency was abolished September 1, 1946, by the Naval Appropriations Act (60 Stat. 501), July 8, 1946. The U.S. Maritime Administration succeeded the War Shipping Administration.
The ship, now renamed the USS Butte, was transferred to the U.S. Coast Guard on September 6, 1943, and recommissioned with its original name, USCG Mayflower (WPE-153), on October 19, 1943. The Mayflower’s mission was to patrol the Atlantic coast to guard against German U-boats, escort coastal commercial shipping and serve as a radar training ship at Norfolk and Boston. This mission was the ship’s final service to the nation; it was decommissioned on July 1, 1946, and returned to the War Shipping Administration.

The Mayflower’s service as a Coast Guard ship necessitated substantial changes. The bowsprit, funnel and masts were removed. The superstructure turrets and depth charge racks replaced the open promenade deck. Navy gray paint replaced the former ivory paint. But the sharp bow and steeply inswept stern reflecting the original yacht design remained.

Mayflower’s Service during World War II resulted in its crew members being awarded the American Campaign Medal as well as the World War II Victory Medal. The American Campaign Medal was awarded to naval personnel serving in the American Theater. The U.S. colors are placed in the center, while the German and Japanese colors flank the U.S. colors. The World War II Victory Medal was awarded to all members of the United States Armed Forces who served on active duty in World War II at any time between December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946, both dates inclusive. The medal was established by Public Law No. 135, July 6, 1945. The American Campaign Medal is pictured on the left; the World War II Victory Medal on the right. During a period of retrenchment after World War II, the Navy and Coast Guard decided to reduce their fleets. The Mayflower, no longer needed, was sold to Frank M. Shaw of Baltimore on January 8, 1947.

Shaw used the ship to hunt for seals in the Arctic. Mayflower, while steaming to sealing waters between Greenland and Labrador, was damaged by fire near Point Lookout in early March.

The vessel returned to Baltimore, where it was sold eventually to the local company Collins Distributors Inc., early in March 1948.
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The Vessel known primarily as the **Mayflower** served the U.S. government for nearly 50 years. This service included military action in the Spanish-American War, World War I and World War II. The ship served as a presidential yacht under five administrations and as both a Navy and Coast Guard ship, resulting in an illustrious career. During these times the crews who operated the **Mayflower** were awarded five medals for their service: West Indies Naval Campaign Medal (Sampson Medal); Spanish Campaign Medal; World War I Victory Medal; American Campaign Medal; and World War II Victory Medal. Their loyalty and devotion to their shipmates, their ship, their service branch and their nation serve as the basis for the **Mayflower**’s reputation.

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**The New Owner** installed new boilers while the ship was in New York. The vessel received new documentation, was renamed the **Malla** and was registered with the Panamanian government. **Malla** steamed to Genoa, Italy, where work was done to enable it to serve as a merchant vessel for the Mediterranean coastwise trade. But rather than being put to use for merchant shipping, the **Malla** departed secretly from Marseilles and arrived at Haifa, in the British Mandate of Palestine, on September 3, 1948. The **Malla**’s passengers were Jewish refugees who were former passengers of the ill-fated **Exodus**, which was refused entry into Palestine during the summer of 1947. The Israeli government purchased the **Malla** in 1950 and renamed it INS **Maoz** (K 24). The new acquisition was added to the nation’s naval fleet to serve as a patrol ship and training ship. The **Maoz** was decommissioned in 1955 and may have been sent to a European scrapyard.
In May and June of 1942, Nantucket Island, off the coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, was a major landing spot for the survivors of ships that were sunk in the North Atlantic by German U-boats during World War II. In total, 649 Allied sailors were rescued and landed in 16 ports in New England. Of those ports, only Boston (with 268) landed more people than Nantucket. Nantucket rescued more survivors than any port in southern New England – Newport had 36, New Bedford had 27 and Woods Hole had 23. Because of the exigencies of war, these rescued sailors mostly arrived on Nantucket in darkness and were given round-the-clock security details, but they were warmly welcomed by the islanders during their brief stays before being whisked to Newport by the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter General Greene, under the command of Lieutenant (junior grade) P. F. Shea.
JUST A WEEK BEFORE the first survivors were landed, three vessels from Nantucket’s Coast Guard Auxiliary and their crews were taken into the Coast Guard Reserve. The vessels were the Dancing Lady, Alice A. and Squam, and the men – led by George Andrews, commander; H. Brooks Walker, vice-commander; and Charles Whelden, junior vice-commander – were Balfour Yerxa, Everett Chapel, Arthur McCleave, Manuel Reis, Irving Bartlett, and Hollis Burchell. Overall Nantucket utilized five Coast Guard Auxiliary or Reserve vessels and four stations – Brant Point, Coskata, Madaket and Surfside – for the rescues. Protecting the island’s shores was an island-wide effort, touching everyone, everything and everywhere.

Although few American civilians appreciated it at the time, the Nantucket Lightship, stationed 40 miles southeast of Nantucket, was a lamp that attracted both Allied mariners and their predators. The Germans struck hard in vulnerable areas until resources were poured in, then struck elsewhere (the Caribbean, South America, St. Lawrence), returning when defenses weakened, as in early 1945, with another surge of U-boats against New England. Nantucket was a lifering for their predators. The British Motor Ship Peisander, Norland, Polyphebus and Mattawin.

Peisander

The British motor ship Peisander was torpedoed and sunk southeast of Nantucket by U-653 under Gerhard Feiler on May 17, 1942. Days later, a wary Allied ship named Plow City approached the captain’s lifeboat, fled, and was quickly sunk by U-588 under Victor Vogel. Then the British steamship Baron Semple offered to take the men from two of the three Peisander lifeboats, but the shipwrecked sailors voted against being cramped passengers to South Africa in favor of a chance at adventure sailing to America. It was “a decision which surprised everyone aboard the steamship.” Harvard Professor John Stilgoe, in his study of lifeboats, relates how at 3 a.m. on May 24, “an able-bodied seaman ... heard what he thought might be a cow mooing. He woke [Peisander’s First Mate] Frank Brown,

F.Kapt. Ernst-August Rehwinkel, U-583, which sank the Polyphemus on May 27, 1942 – note the snorting bull insignia on conning tower, worn by men who served with Gunther Prien, the “Bull of Scapa Flow.” – Photo courtesy of DUBMA.

... commanding the boat, who soon discovered the sound to be that of surf breaking on Nantucket Island beaches. A few hours later, trailing a sail astern on a line to slow their progress through the surf, the castaways aboard the double-ended life-boat arrived on the sand unharmed after six days.”

Brown’s boat, with 23 men, spent from dawn to just after midday slowly being pushed westwards along the coast until it arrived off Madaket, and landed at about 1 p.m. Boat Six, with 20 men under Peisander’s engineer John Wilson, followed close behind. They were picked up at 1:30 p.m. and towed by CGR 37, then quickly handed over to the motor-lifeboat CGR 3828, based at Madaket. Together, the rescue boats towed the first two lifeboats and 43 survivors to Brant Point Coast Guard Station, arriving at 5:40 p.m. The Red Cross, already busy with a large influx of injured servicemen, met the Peisander survivors, and they “were taken to Bennett Hall, where they received medical attention, food and clothing. Most of them were suffering from exhaustion, and needed rest and refreshment only, but three were taken to Nantucket Hospital for special care, x-rays, etc.”

At 9 a.m. on May 24, the 18 men in Boat Two under Peisander’s Captain Angus Shaw heard breakers on the port bow. Deducing that they had drifted south onto Nantucket Shoals, Shaw shaped a course northeast for eight miles. At 5 p.m., two planes saw them and circled around the lifeboat. The fog set in thickly, then darkness. At 1:40 p.m., General Greene was ordered from Newport to the aid of Boat Two and pulled into Nantucket Harbor for a few hours, until 3 a.m. At daylight on May 25, the planes returned and dropped supplies of first aid, tomato juice, American pemmican and chocolate. Second steward Doyle could only swallow liquids because his teeth had become so painful. Shaw kept some of the boat’s emergency rations and complained that even his dog wouldn’t eat them.

Finally the fog cleared and they were discovered by General Greene at 9:45 a.m. En route, the rescuers attacked a suspected
U-boat, but given the shallow water (the lifeboat was at anchor) it couldn’t have been a U-boat. The depth charges most likely bounced off the sea floor and lifted the cutter’s stern over 10 feet out of the water, causing Lieutenant Shea to consider abandoning ship. The *Peisander* men were then picked up at 10:45 a.m. Shaw said they “were treated very well ... and those who required medical treatment were attended to.” A *Greene* officer said “some of them were in poor condition and had to be assisted from the lifeboat.” Just 54 minutes after arriving at Brant Point at 4:06 p.m. the *Greene* “un-moored and stood away from dock. Received two life boats for transportation.” Sixty *Peisander* men and three boats landed in Newport.

**ONLY BRITISH SECOND STEWARD** Leonard Woyle, 37, was put ashore for hospitalization. The poor fellow had lost his false teeth overboard in the attack. When provided a complete set by the Red Cross, he wrote them a grateful letter from New York. Headquarters also commended the Nantucket branch. Woyle later took a ferry to the mainland.

**CAPTAIN SHAW WAS PROUD** of the derring-do of his men in the other boats refusing the *Baron Semple*. As with *Plow City* and *Polyphemus* (see below), rescue ships were often quickly sunk themselves. In November that year, Shaw was honored with a King’s Commendation for “brave conduct when their ships encountered enemy ships, submarines, aircraft or mines.”

**Polyphemus and Norland**

**THE NORWEGIAN MOTOR** tanker *Norland* was attacked and sunk after a fight with *U-108*, under the command of Klaus Scholtz, east of Bermuda on May 20, 1942. Another Allied ship, the large passenger liner *Polyphemus*, rescued 14 survivors of the
Norland before it too was sunk on May 27 by August Rehwinkel in U-578. Polyphemus’s Boat Three held seven Polyphemus and three Norland men under Dutch Third Officer Jan Dykdrenth. Germans had a strong presence off the U.S. coast at the time, and two U-boats provided aid to the men in the lifeboat before they reached shore. Dietrich Borchert on U-556 gave the men water, a course to Nantucket, his last name, and the chance to stretch their legs and walk the U-boat’s deck. The following day U-593, under the command of Gerd Kelbling, logged that a “life boat cutter with sail from Dutch Polyphemus passed. A can of bread and a flask of rum [was] handed over.” They were 35 miles off Siasconset and it was very rough.

On June 4, the Greene raced from Newport looking for Polyphemus survivors. At 5:45 p.m. on June 5, they found Boat Three, assisted the men aboard and brought them and their boat to Brant Point. Robert Mooney relates that “the Red Cross called for volunteers, and scores of nurses and volunteers responded to help out. This ... left a lasting memory with all who attended them.” Mooney knew whereof he spoke – his father was the island’s police chief and his mother headed the Red Cross. The men spent the weekend in Bennett Hall, and on “Sunday, all ten men filed into the Congregational Church to morning service through the door connecting with Bennett Hall, thus keeping within bounds. In the afternoon they were taken, still carefully guarded, to a baseball game which they thoroughly enjoyed.”

One must assume that “keeping within bounds” and “still carefully guarded” refer to military security precautions, since they were all Allies – three Dutch officers, a British radio operator, three Chinese crew (one from Canton, the others from Shanghai), two Scottish teenagers (both named Campbell) and a 22-year-old Scottish Ordinary Seaman. A curious boy named Maurice Gibbs tried to see more of the survivors, but they were sequestered. “Although townspeople were asked, and did, respond quickly with clothing and bedding, the survivors were kept somewhat isolated. I do remember my mother taking what little we could give [to them]. However, she only went to the door of Bennett Hall.” Norland survivors were interviewed by U.S. Navy officials, but were so confused over both submarine attacks that they “were ... often mixing the details” of different attacks. Today this might be attributed to post-traumatic stress disorder.

Mattawin

On May 31, the British ship Mattawin, under Captain Charles Sweeney, passed Nantucket en route from New York to Cape Town, and went by Nantucket Lightship at dawn, as instructed. That night,
U-553, under Karl Thurmann, sank her. The men sent SOS messages, which both the German and U.S. navies received. Boat Three held 19 men, under Third Officer Geoffrey Griffiths, who were left behind as 52 of their shipmates were rescued by steamships or landed at Nauset. On June 6, the indefatigable Greene was sent to a spot where a plane had dropped food to about 20 men in a lifeboat off Nantucket, but blimp K-3 lost contact in the all-enshrouding fog.

The survivors were discovered southeast of George’s Bank just after 10 a.m. on Sunday, June 7. Less than half an hour later, the boat was alongside and all 19 Allies were taken aboard, with their names and ranks recorded. The Greene was back underway for Nantucket before 11 a.m. and arrived at Steamship Wharf just after midnight. The Mattawin men weren’t permitted ashore, since a few hours later, at 5:25 a.m., the seven Polyphemus and three Norland survivors paddled down the empty wharf to board the Greene. They were all bound for the navy base in Newport.

This group of 29 men was the widest cross-section of Allies who landed on Nantucket. They hailed from Australia, Canada, China, the Gold Coast, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the United Kingdom and the United States. There were 15 merchant crew and a British gunner from the Mattawin. The three Ivy-league American
Field Service volunteers were Edward LeBoutillier, Ronald Gubelman and Coffin Colket Wilson III. Seven of the men were from British West Africa, including Johah Peter of Monrovia, who suffered a head wound when he was thrown into the sea from his lookout perch, and Captain Kwesi Blankson, cleaner, from the Gold Coast. Lieutenant Shea noted with satisfaction that “this accounts for all the Mattawin lifeboats known to have been launched.” The survivors were very pleased to learn that all of their shipmates had also made it ashore, many on nearby Cape Cod.

**By the evening** of its return to Newport, the Greene was on its next assignment, standing by Empire Woodcock, disabled off Brenton Reef. There would be no more Nantucket rescues for her during the war. The following day Lieutenant Shea was sent for inpatient treatment at Naval Hospital Newport, reasons not given. He had done stellar duty.

**Conclusion**

Since the islanders (or at least the military) provided escorts and regulated the movements of their foreign guests carefully, it’s clear that they were wary of them, but the seagoing people who populated Nantucket were quick to aid distressed colleagues. Without hesitation, they scoured their thin cupboards and threadbare drawers to provide for the transients. This enabled the mariners, whose skills were much in demand, to return to their jobs on the bridges and in the pantries and engine rooms of Allied ships. There, they took the war to the enemy, one ball bearing and cup of flour at a time.

Through their humanity and unspoken empathy, the skilled mariners who pulled the survivors ashore on Nantucket, using tiny dories and large cutters, also provided them with an intangible – dignity – during an ignoble episode. For the survivors, it was a traumatic time: identities were confused, and foe, not friend, popped out of the depths multiple times – some Norland men witnessed four or more U-boats between sinking and shore. Nantucket laid out its welcome for men of 11 nationalities from five continents. As Mooney put it, “our shoal waters permit so few of these disasters to come to us. But if and when they come, we are ready to meet them.”

No other U.S. community had spent so many years voyaging in foreign lands, from the Arctic to the tropics, and working hand-in-hand with polyglot mariners, than Nantucketers did in the global whaling and sealing voyages of the 1700s and 1800s. In the spring of 1942, Nantucket townsfolk and beachcombers alike drew on their cosmopolitan outlook to benefit strangers on their shore. Nantucket’s proud elbow jutting into the North Atlantic provided a roost for desperate sailors to latch onto with the help of the island’s life-savers and the Coast Guard. That was enough to save nearly 100 lives, allowing them to keep fighting the Battle of the Atlantic, the longest continuously fought engagement of World War II.
In January 2016, the director of the China Atomic Energy Authority, Xu Dazhe, revealed that China was planning to develop offshore floating nuclear energy plants as part of the country’s desire to become a “maritime power.” The plants would be used to provide electricity for offshore oil platforms and artificial islands in the South China Sea.

Alexei Likhachev, chief of the Rosatom State Nuclear Energy Corporation, declared in May 2018 that Russia had already built the world’s first floating nuclear power plant. Likhachev stated that the barge (named the Akademik Lomonosov) was “a new world first” and “underlines the undoubted leading role of Rosatom and the Russian nuclear energy sector on the global agenda.” Russia would use the floating power plant to provide electricity to develop oil resources in remote Arctic regions.

The honor of the first floating nuclear power plant actually goes to a World War II Liberty ship renamed Sturgis. The vessel was modified by the United States Army Corp of Engineers in the 1960s. The interest in using small nuclear power reactors for land-based needs in remote locations had its roots in President Eisenhower’s “Atoms for Peace” initiative in the early 1950s. A 1952 Department of Defense study determined that nuclear reactors could safely generate electricity, and the Army Corps of Engineers was given this responsibility in 1954 within the newly created Army Nuclear Power Program.

The Corps developed the MH-1A (Mobile High Power Plant 1A) nuclear power reactor plant, which was capable of generating 10 megawatts, and decided to use a surplus Liberty ship instead of building a barge to house the reactor. The reactor was similar to the plant onboard the nuclear ship NS Savannah and U.S. Navy submarines, except that this would be used to generate electricity for off-shore requirements.
The Transformation of the SS Charles H. Cugle

The SS Charles H. Cugle was built as a Type Z-EC2-S-C5 Liberty ship by the J.A. Jones Construction Company in Panama City, Florida. She was one of the very last Liberty ships built when she was launched on August 13, 1945, as hull number 105 under U.S. Maritime Contract number 3145.

The Type Z-EC2-S-C5 Liberty ships were designed to carry boxed aircraft and had four larger hatches instead of the standard five. These ships also carried heavier loading gear that included four sets of kingposts instead of the three tube-shaped masts. The Cugle arrived too late to see wartime service and was placed in a reserve fleet until March 1963, when the Corps selected the ship not only because of her excellent condition but also because of her over-sized cargo holds, which held plenty of room to install the 350-ton reactor. Martin Marietta was awarded a $17 million contract to build the highly classified nuclear reactor in 1961. The Cugle’s midsection was completely removed and replaced by a 212-ft section that was wider than the original Liberty ship design. This included removing the ship’s engine to make room for the reactor and enlarging her superstructure to accommodate a crew of 44 nuclear-qualified technicians. The turbine and electrical generating systems, along with the extensive superstructure modifications, were built out separately at the Alabama Drydock and Shipbuilding Company in Mobile, Alabama.

Diagram showing the major components of the MH-1A nuclear power plant and associated systems. Power lines run off the bow into the region that needs power. – Power Reactors in Small Packages, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Scientific and Technical Information.

The reactor vessel was protected from collisions by a four-ft-thick, 800-ton concrete shield with an additional 600 tons of lead and poly for protection against radiation for the crew. The ship’s rudder was enlarged for maneuvering while under tow, and her steam-powered steering engine was replaced with an electro-hydraulic unit. A refueling attachment and supporting cranes were installed. The Sturgis also had a feature that allowed it to tie into foreign power systems that used 50-cycle power.

The conversion work was completed in 1966 and was in compliance with the standards of the United States Coast Guard and American Bureau of Shipping. The Coast Guard certified the vessel as a “Manned, Non-propelled, Seagoing Barge for Ocean Service.” She was towed to Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, and renamed Sturgis after the late General Samuel D. Sturgis Jr., head of the Corps from 1953 to 1956.

The MH-1A nuclear plant onboard the Sturgis began operating on January 25, 1967, after its reactor core was loaded with low-enriched uranium and tested at Fort Belvoir. The Sturgis was moored at a specially built pier at Gunston Cove on Fort Belvoir off the Potomac River, where transmission lines were hooked up from the dock to a utility grid. An MH-1A analog simulator was constructed near the Army’s first nuclear-powered reactor, the SM-1 (Stationary, Medium-size reactor, 1st prototype), for training nuclear technicians who would be working onboard the Sturgis.

Deployment considerations included Vietnam until the State Department rejected the idea. The Sturgis was instead towed to Gatun Lake at the Panama Canal, which was experiencing drought conditions that caused a shortage of hydroelectric power and had at times to be shut down. The power was needed to keep the lake at a certain level to permit vessels to pass through the canal, especially ships needed for the Vietnam War. Increased ship traffic through the canal was also a result of the Suez Canal closing between 1967 and 1975 at the beginning of the Six-Day War between Israel and its Arab neighbors. The hydroelectric power system in the canal was also under increased residential demand as well as heavy power usage from the 57 electric locomotive “mules” (175 hp each), which were used to tow vessels through the locks.

**Nuclear Operations in the Panama Canal Zone**

The reactor on the Sturgis began supplying 10 megawatts of power in October 1968 to the Panama Canal Zone. A General Accounting Office report stated that the “356 million kilowatt hours of power furnished by the Sturgis” would have required the local hydroelectric plant to use “approximately 1.92 trillion gallons of water,” which was “equivalent to the amount of water required to transit 12 ships a day.”

The Sturgis’s reactor was refueled after a year of uninterrupted service. The refueling was completed in a week, from October 17 to 23, 1969. In its lifetime, it used a total of five cores composed of low-enriched uranium “in the range of 4 to 7%, with a total amount of uranium-235 supplied being 541.5 kilograms.” The Sturgis was originally planned to operate for just two to three years, but the Panama Canal Company extended her service to 1976 because of a 6-percent annual power increase demand.

There were several reasons why the Sturgis’s service wasn’t extended beyond 1976. Highly trained personnel working on the Sturgis were regularly being rotated to other assignments in order to further their Army careers; the Army constantly required new specialists. New Atomic Energy Commission safety regulations on nuclear plants, plus the costs of maintaining compact nuclear power plants, were very expensive and eventually led the Army to stop participating in its nuclear program by 1977. In addition, the Panama Canal Company had purchased additional land-based generating capacity, which obviated the need for the Sturgis’s electrical service.

Another consideration was a terrorist threat that was perceived in July 1976, when “the military commander of the 193rd Infantry Brigade received
intelligence information of potential acts of violence in the Zone during the protracted treaty negotiations between the United States and Panama” and requested that the Sturgis be withdrawn. The decision was made in December 1976 to tow the Sturgis back to Ft. Belvoir since there were no other suitable working sites even if all the safety upgrades had been made to her reactor.

**Long-Term Storage and Final Decommissioning**

During the trip back to Ft. Belvoir from the Panama Canal, the Sturgis encountered a winter storm with 30-ft seas and 70-knot, hurricane-force winds off the coast of South Carolina while being towed by the oceangoing tug Constitution. Seventeen men aboard the Sturgis had to be evacuated after she began listing at a 45-degree angle. The Navy frigate USS Dewey arrived on the scene and escorted the Sturgis and her tug until the Coast Guard cutter Point Martin appeared and took over escort duties off the North Carolina coast. Luckily, the Sturgis remained afloat with no radiation leaks, although her rudder was damaged and two water tanks broke loose below deck. The Sturgis was placed at the Sunny Point Military Terminal south of Wilmington, North Carolina, for repairs because a vertical structural support used for refueling had been damaged during the storm.

The Sturgis finally arrived at Ft. Belvoir in March 1977, where her nuclear fuel was removed and her nuclear systems decontaminated. She was then towed to the James River Reserve Fleet and moored alongside the NS Savannah until the latter was relocated. In 1999, the Sturgis was placed in a Norfolk, Virginia, dry dock for a thorough hull inspection and cleaning. Her hull and superstructure were painted before she was placed back in the Reserve Fleet.

Radiation levels had eroded enough that, by 2006, a plan was created to decommission the MH-1A reactor by removing the primary reactor and all supporting systems. In March of 2014, the Corps awarded a $34.6-million contract to the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company to complete the reactor decommissioning in the Port of Galveston, Texas. Galveston residents were anxious about the removal of radiation material in their vicinity until the Corps reassured them by explaining their processes and safety procedures.

In April 2015 the Sturgis began her 1,750-nautical-mile journey from the James River to Galveston for her final decommissioning. Once the nuclear barge reached Galveston, the Corps, working with a team of contractor personnel, had “safely removed more than 1.5 million pounds of radioactive material and recycled more than 600,000 pounds of lead.” The work was completed in September 2018. The hazardous waste material was shipped to the Waste Control Specialists’ west Texas facility for final disposal.

Donating the Sturgis as a possible museum following decommissioning was considered, but removing the nuclear-related structures removed the history of the vessel, making her essentially an empty hull. Prospective applicants would also have to prove that they had funding for a museum, which could lead to a lengthy process resulting in added maintenance costs. There was also the alternative of disposing of...
The Sturgis as an artificial reef; however, the recycling of materials to help recover decontamination and decommissioning costs was more important.

Health physicists performed radiation surveys to ensure that all radioactive materials had been removed before the Sturgis began the final phase of her journey. The Corps awarded a $1.9-million contract to International Shipbreaking Ltd. to have the Sturgis towed from Galveston and scrapped at the company’s Brownsville, Texas, facility. It was estimated that the recycling would be completed by March of 2019 with about 5,500 tons of metal extracted from the vessel.

It’s ironic that the Sturgis is being dismantled at a time when both Russia and China are now actively pursuing floating nuclear power plants based on an idea that the United States developed over 50 years ago. The Sturgis proved the concept of providing reliable electrical power from a floating nuclear reactor in a remote location. The mobile atomic power plant accomplished its goal during the water shortage emergency in Gatun Lake by providing large-scale power generation that kept the Panama Canal operating with continuous service.

**About the Author**

**Eric Pearson** is a retired computer programmer with over 35 years’ experience working as a contractor at the Johnson Spacecraft Center supporting NASA’s financial and aircraft division operations. In addition to three bachelor degrees, Mr. Pearson received a master’s degree in history from the University of Houston/Clear in 2014. Mr. Pearson’s interest in maritime affairs stems from his father, Capt. James W. Pearson, who was a retired ship captain and Houston Ship Channel pilot.
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If the SSHSA is already part of your estate plans, thank you! Please let us know so we can add your name to The FellowShip League.
Orders for New Ships Continue

RoyaL CARiBiAn ORDERED A THiRD Icon-class cruise ship from Finland’s Meyer Turku yard in 2025. The 200,000-grt vessel will accommodate 5,000 passengers and be powered by liquefied natural gas. The ship will also serve as a test platform for evolving fuel-cell technology being developed by Swedish engineering giant ABB. The first two Icon-class ships are due in 2022 and 2024.

OCEANWIdE EXPeDItiONS ordered a sister ship to the recently delivered Hondius. To be named Janssonius, it will be built at Croatia’s Brodosplit for delivery in October 2021. Of the Polar-class 6 design, the 350-ft ship will have the same 175-passenger capacity as sister Hondius. Both ships will be Polar-class 6 ice-strengthened vessels equivalent to a 1A super ice-class ship.

Like Hondius, Janssonius will come equipped with a number of advanced systems and features specifically designed for voyages throughout the Arctic, Antarctica and sub-Antarctic. These include a protected indoor Zodiac loading area that can also be used for sea-based activities such as kayaking, and there will be two separate gangways to further facilitate ship-to-shore operations. Stern and bow thrusters will also enable Janssonius to drift or remain comfortably stationary.

Janssonius will be powered by two main engines delivering 4,200 kW and enabling speeds of up to 15 knots. The propulsion system of Janssonius will include an adjustable pitch propeller, flexible power management and a shaft generator, as opposed to a diesel-driven generator. This will minimize fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions.

Like most of the ships in Oceanwide’s fleet, Janssonius is named for a historic Dutch cartographer. Johannes Janssonius (1588–1664) was a map maker and publisher born in Arnhem who lived and worked in Amsterdam. He produced the first printed map of the New World in 1625, and his works were widely distributed throughout Europe. Janssonius’s cartographic legacy includes the creation of the Janssonius Atlas, a comprehensive map collection that remained in print for over a century. His maps were renowned for their accuracy and detail, and they played a significant role in the development of cartography during the Dutch Golden Age. Today, Janssonius is remembered as one of the most influential cartographers of the 17th century, and his work continues to be celebrated for its aesthetic beauty and historical significance.

Ship Sales

wiTH A NUMBER OF NEwLY BUILT cruise ships entering service, older vessels are finding trading buyers rather than heading to the breakers.

TUrKEY’S INTEGRATED tour operator Anex Tour has agreed to purchase Saga Sapphire a) Europa b) SuperStar Europe c) SuperStar Aires d) Holiday Dream e) Bleu de France from Saga Cruises when the ship retires next summer. The Saga Sapphire will be delivered in mid-2020 and reportedly will operate cruises from Antalya, Turkey, to various ports in the Eastern Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. The ship was built in 1981 and measures 37,012 grt and 653 feet long with a beam of 92 feet. The 758-passenger vessel’s final cruise will be a 33-night Grand Finale sailing from the United Kingdom on May 6.

PONANT cruises will acquire Paul Gauguin Cruises in a bid to grow its share of the American market. In addition to adding the 332-passenger Paul Gaugin to its fleet, Ponant will retain the Paul Gaugin brand, its management and its Bellevue, Washington, offices.

When Paul Gauguin was delivered by the Changiers de l’Atlantique yard at St. Nazaire, France, in 1989, the vessel sailed for Regent Seven Seas under the terms of a 10-year lease that expired in 2009. Paul Gauguin Cruises has been operated for the last 10 years by Pacific Beachcomber, a firm that also handles half a dozen resorts in French Polynesia.
worked primarily in Amsterdam. **Competitor** Aurora Expeditions has entered into an agreement with shipbuilder Sunstone to build another X-Bow ship for delivery in 2021. A sister ship to the soon-to-be-launched Greg Mortimer, it will be similar in design and also feature the X-Bow – an inverted bow that allows for gentler sea crossings and reduced emissions. Aurora Expeditions is the first cruise operator to use this technology, created by Norwegian ship designer Ulstein to make expedition cruising more comfortable.

The yet-to-be-named second ship is set to debut out of Ushuaia, Argentina, ahead of the 2021-22 Antarctic season.

**Blue World Voyage Plans Start-Up**

Blue World Voyages continues to eye a 2021 start for its active lifestyle cruise brand and has released details of its planned cruise ship.

**The company hopes** to launch service in 2021 in the Mediterranean, offering seven-day cruises. Capacity on the yet-to-be-named vessel, which the company plans to acquire secondhand, will be reduced to 425 berths. Staterooms will be enlarged, and there will also be solo cabins as well as residences aboard the ship. A full deck will be dedicated for spa operations and wellness, plus another deck for sports and fitness.

**Disney Names Latest Ship**

Disney announced that its 1,125-foot newbuilding will be named Disney Wish. Currently Hull 705, it will feature 1,250 staterooms accommodating 4,000 passengers. The 140,000-grt ship will begin cruises from Port Canaveral, Florida, in January 2022.

**Shipyard Troubles and Delayed Deliveries**

Spain’s Barreras shipyard has delayed delivery of Ritz Carlton’s newbuilding Azora. Initially set for delivery November 2018, the maiden voyage has quietly been postponed until February 2020 and the ship will be renamed Evrima. The yard announced that the ship was further delayed and that it was seeking an additional $55 million, which would boost the construction price to $320 million. The shipyard is already facing penalties due to the delay of the ship’s delivery to Ritz Carlton.

**The shipyard** has halted the construction of two coastal passenger ships for Havila Kystruten. A competitor of Hurtigruten, Havila reportedly is having financial difficulties. The status of Star Clippers’ 330-passenger Flying Clipper is something of a mystery. The sail-assisted vessel made its first voyage while still under the ownership of builder Brodosplit. It made its initial trip from Split, Croatia, to the Ultra Europe festival on Hvar. The contract to build the vessel has been effectively canceled while both parties remain in arbitration.

**Funchal Back in Limbo**

Signature Living’s plans for pioneering its first party boat hotel appear to have collapsed. The firm planned to offer a one-of-a-kind journey from Liverpool in search of the biggest and best overseas party destinations. In late December 2018, Signature Living revealed an ambitious refurbishment project for converting the Funchal into a luxury party hotel ship. Unfortunately, the new owners failed to make the payments required under the terms of the ship’s auction.

**Zenith Retiring**

Pullmantur has announced that Zenith will leave its fleet in early 2020. No replacement has been named but speculation is that it might be the third Sovereign-class ship operated by Royal Caribbean International. There also is speculation that Maritime Voyages might be interested in Zenith.

**Renovations Planned**

Royal Caribbean International’s Freedom of the Seas will be renovated as part of the line’s Royal Amplified program. The 13-year-old vessel will receive a $116-million upgrade that includes adding the Perfect Storm racing waterslides, a Splashaway Bay toddler aqua park and a three-level Lime and Coconut poolside bar. The line will also add more dining venues and redo the teen space and Adventure Club.

Hurtigruten is expanding its hybrid-powered fleet by adding green
technology to Trollfjord, Finnmarken and Midnatsol as part of a major renovation project set to be completed in 2021.

The three ships will be renamed as part of the transformation; Trollfjord will become Maud, Finnmarken will become Otto Sverdrup, and Midnatsol will be Eirik Raude.

The ships will be fitted with battery packs to allow the engines to operate using hybrid power. Shore-powered equipment will also mean the ships can operate using only battery power when docked in ports with shore power facilities, cutting emissions to zero.

Among the updates set to transform the three ships, all cabins and suites will be renovated, with new suites added, and all public spaces will be redesigned.

The main restaurants will become Restaurant Aune, and a new specialty venue, Restaurant Lindstrom, will offer modern Norwegian cuisine. Fredheim will serve as the ships’ more informal dining venue, and a new outdoor grill will also be introduced.

Finnmarken will be the first ship to be retrofitted with battery packs, in 2020, with Hurtigruten revealing that it has a letter of intent for the same updates for Trollfjord and Midnatsol in 2021.

Christening

Following repeated delivery delays, the Scenic Eclipse departed on its maiden voyage from Iceland on August 15. Academy Award-winning actress Helen Mirren was scheduled to serve as the godmother for Scenic Eclipse when the expedition vessel visited New York on September 10. The 200-passenger vessel will have two helicopters and a submarine capable of depths of nearly 1,000 feet.

Celebrity’s Regulatory Issues

Since late June, passengers booked on Xpedition (marketed as Celebrity Xpedition) in the Galapagos have found themselves instead sailing on Celebrity’s smaller expedition vessels or being given the option to cancel for a full refund. This is a result of regulatory issues with the Ecuadorian government.

The ship isn’t sailing because, with it in service as it presently is, the number of passengers Celebrity is permitted to have in the Galapagos is exceeded. To sail there, an operator must have a token, issued by the government, for a specified number of people. Celebrity currently has three tokens – one each for 100 people, 48 people and 16 people – for a total of 164 people that the line is permitted to have onboard its ships at any given time.

Because the line’s newest ship, Celebrity Flora, has a capacity of 100 people, Xpedition, which previously held 100 people, needed to be reduced to 64 people, the total number afforded by the remaining two tokens.

Although the government tentatively approved an exception to a law that prevents the combining of tokens, the exception was later revoked, forcing Celebrity to further reduce the capacity of Xpedition to 48. The line is now waiting for approval of the newly reduced-capacity ship to make its way through the regulatory system.

Casualties

MSC Opera returned to seven-day cruise service on June 14. A sailing scheduled for June 8 was canceled due to an investigation into the ship’s June 2 collision with Uniworld’s River Countess.

The 6,057-grt Silver Explorer

a) Delfin Clipper b) Sally Clipper c) Delfin Clipper d) Baltic Clipper e) Delfin Star f) Delfin Clipper g) Dream 21 h) World Adventurer

Scenic Eclipse at Hook of Holland, Netherlands, in 2019. (See “Christening”) – Kees Torn photo.
i) World Discoverer  j) Prince Albert II was damaged after becoming entangled in a drifting fishing net in the Bering Sea during an 11-day cruise. The Explorer suffered damage to its reduction gears after the net became tangled in the ship’s propellers. The mishap forced Silversea Cruises to cancel the ship’s July 1 cruise and shorten a 17-day cruise by five days to permit the vessel to travel to Vancouver for repairs.

Russian authorities abruptly denied the Hurtigruten’s Franz Josef permission to land for two calls scheduled for August. The cruises were scheduled to call at Spitsbergen and were canceled as a result of Russia’s actions.

Grand Bahama Island was pounded for more than 30 hours with a life-threatening storm surge and catastrophic winds (150 knots) from Hurricane Dorian in late August. At least seven people were confirmed dead in the Bahamas, with 13,000 houses feared damaged or destroyed. The dangerous conditions prompted numerous cruise ship itinerary changes and cancellations, as well as port closures up and down the coast of Florida and the Bahamas. Port Canaveral, Palm Beach and Freeport (Grand Bahama) have closed. PortMiami and Fort Lauderdale’s Port Everglades had also closed, but reopened on September 3. Jacksonville Port Authority closed all terminals to incoming vessels as of September 2. Charleston moved up embarkation of ships leaving September 2 and closed on September 4 and September 5, reopening on September 6. Tampa and Baltimore ports remained open.

Norwegian Cruise Line, Bahamas Paradise Cruise Line, Disney Cruise Line and Carnival Cruises canceled sailings leaving Florida ports, and other lines modified itineraries for passenger safety. Additionally, Royal Caribbean, MSC, Norwegian and Carnival altered the lengths of certain itineraries to avoid port closures.

A technical issue with Grandeur of the Seas’ propulsion system forced Royal Caribbean to abandon the ship’s cruise on September 3 so it could return to port for emergency repairs. The 1,992-passenger ship had departed Baltimore on August 31 for a five-night cruise to Bermuda when it began to experience the technical issues.

Royal Caribbean also closed its private island, Perfect Day at CocoCay, in the Bahamas until September 7 because of Hurricane Dorian.

Chesapeake Shipbuilding Delivers American Harmony

On July 18, American Cruise Lines announced that its newest modern riverboat, American Harmony, has successfully passed sea trials and received its Coast Guard Certification. The second ship in the company’s series of five modern riverboats has departed from Chesapeake Shipbuilding in Salisbury, Maryland, and was 23 days ahead of schedule. The American Harmony arrived at New Orleans and was scheduled to remain docked in its new homeport until it departed on its inaugural Mississippi River cruise on August 17. In addition to American Harmony, American Cruise Lines introduced its first modern series flagship, American Song, on the Mississippi in 2018. Likewise, it plans to introduce its third modern riverboat, American Jazz, on the Mississippi in 2020. The American
**Harmony** is American Cruise Lines’ third modern riverboat and 11th new ship. **American Cruise Lines**’ fourth modern riverboat will be named **American Melody**. Chesapeake Shipbuilding in Salisbury, Maryland, is expected to deliver the vessel in 2020 after its fleetmate, **American Jazz**, enters service.

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**Port of Baltimore News**

The **Helen Delich Bentley Port** of Baltimore celebrated National Maritime Day with a free expo featuring several ships, a unique tour of the first nuclear-powered merchant ship and maritime-themed exhibits. The family-friendly event also included a National Maritime Day ceremony held onboard the **NS Savannah**, one of only four nuclear-powered ships ever built. The event, now in its 11th year, was hosted by the Baltimore Port Alliance.

The ceremony held onboard the **NS Savannah** recognized the 55th anniversary of the ship's first port call to Baltimore. The event included a wreath laying and a water cannon salute honoring fallen merchant mariners. National Maritime Day, which falls on May 22, is the only day of the year that the NS Savannah is open for public tours. It was officially deactivated in 1971 and since 2008 has been moored in its current location in Baltimore.

**Evergreen Marine** Corporation’s **Triton** has the honor of being the largest-capacity container ship to have recently called at Baltimore, with a capacity of 14,424 TEUs. Up to this point, the **Gunde Maersk**, which arrived in October, was the port’s largest container ship, with a capacity of 11,000 TEUs. Baltimore is among the few east coast ports to have both a 50-ft-deep channel as well as a 50-ft-deep berth, with a second such berth planned. The Triton arrived in Baltimore on May 24 after completing a transpacific voyage that started April 19 from Xiamen, China.

On June 9, port officials were feted aboard the **Carnival Pride** to celebrate a decade of cruise service from the Cruise Maryland Terminal. Carnival Cruises noted that more than one million passengers had been their guests aboard the **Carnival Pride** during that period. This year, the vessel will offer a variety of cruises to Bermuda and the Bahamas and partial transits of the Panama Canal.

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**Port of Philadelphia News**

**The Spirit of Philadelphia** has operated year-round for 35 years, offering entertainment, events, and lunch and dinner. During that time, about 3 million people have boarded the ship, which can accommodate up to 530 guests. Enterprise Cruises also offers excursions from Philadelphia aboard its 110-passenger private yacht **Freedom Elite**.

**Port Newark News**

On Friday, July 19, **The Cape Akritas** arrived on its maiden voyage at Maher Terminals at the Elizabeth Port Authority Marine Terminal. The ship was built in 2016 by Hanjin Subic Shipyard and is owned by Athens-based Costamare, which operates a fleet of 76 container ships. The 11,000-TEU Cape Akritas, registered in Malta, has been chartered to Evergreen Marine Corporation, a Taiwanese container transportation and shipping company. It’s currently operating as part of the Ocean Alliance, connecting Hong Kong, South China and Taiwan with United States East Coast ports.

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**Towing, Salvage and Rescue Ship Names**

On June 21, Washington, D.C., announced that the next Towing, Salvage and Rescue Ship (probably easier to remember by its hull classification: T-ATS) will be named **Cherokee Nation**. The U.S. Navy website noted that the
ship is named “in honor of the service and contributions the Cherokee people have made to the Navy and Marine Corps.” The ship will be designated as T-ATS 7.

**The Future Cherokee Nation** is the second ship in a new class of T-ATSs that will be called the Navajo class, with the first being named the Navajo and designated as T-ATS 6. All ships in this class will be named for either notable Native American individuals or Native American tribes.

**The Third Ship** will be named Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek for the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe in Michigan. For those interested in Native American history, the name Ojibwe can be referred to as Chippewa or Anishinabek (one of many spelling variants). This is the first ship to bear this particular name and the fifth honoring the Saginaw Chippewa people.

**All Three** of the new ships will be built at Gulf Island Shipyards in Houma, Louisiana. The firm was awarded a nearly $64-million contract “for the detail design and construction” of the new ships. At the time of this publication, it’s expected that the three ships will be completed between March and July of 2021.

**South Carolina Ports News**

There are a few news items coming from the South Carolina Ports Authority from over the summer that are worth noting. Overall, the ports of the Palmetto State are going strong. Port volumes were higher than those of fiscal year 2018 – container volume was up 10.2 percent with 1,251,247 boxes handled from July through May. Much of this has to do with new cranes (14 so far of the 24 expected) that have been installed at the Wando terminal.

**Similar news** came in early August, not long after the commencement of fiscal year 2020, when the SCPA reported already having a solid start, largely because of container and inland ports traffic. Container volume is anticipated to increase even more in the coming years when the Hugh K. Leatherman Sr. Terminal opens in North Charleston.

**On the Lighter Side**, two children had the honor of having their suggestions picked for the naming of two cranes at Inland Port Greer. The “Name the Cranes” contest chose Little Miss Sunshine and South Cranelolina out of the 550 entries. Some of the other names that have been selected previously were Daddy Long Legs, Craneous Maximus, Cranebob Bluepants, Heavy Metal and Bluesaurus Rex.

**Vietnam War Naval Exhibit to Open at Norfolk Museum**

The Hampton Roads Naval Museum was scheduled to open its doors to a new exhibit, starting October 9, focusing on the U.S. Navy’s involvement in the Vietnam War. The exhibit, entitled The Ten Thousand-Day War at Sea: The U.S. Navy in Vietnam, 1950–1975, intends to give visitors an in-depth view into the Navy’s operations in the region during that time. Planning for the exhibit began in January of 2017 in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of American involvement in the conflict. The exhibit will be open for the next three years.

The exhibit serves as a reminder of the over 1.8 million American sailors who served over the duration of the war. It will include oral history videos with over 40 local Vietnam veterans, whose personal stories will give visitors an added perspective on the war.

HRNM, part of the Naval History and Heritage Command, is located in Downtown Norfolk, Virginia, on the second floor of the Nauticus campus adjacent to Battleship Wisconsin (BB-64).

**Many thanks** to Max Lonzanida, the museum’s Public Affairs Officer, who provided the information used to compile this article and for sharing one of the posters for the exhibit. For more information about the museum and the exhibit, be sure to visit www.hrnm.navy.mil, take a look at their Facebook page at HRNavalMuseum or visit the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service at www.dvidshub.net/unit/HRNM.
Ferries

NYC Ferry got the word out on its Facebook page that on the busy holiday times – Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day – the ferries wouldn’t be able to handle the crowds waiting for transport to Rockaway for a beach day. Passengers were urged to arrive early and wait in line.

NYC Ferry is using Brooklyn Navy Yard as its ferry repair shop, complete with a new Travel Lift. On some Saturdays and Sundays, the company is chartering NY Waterway ferries to do its routes so that vessels can be worked on for weekday operations.

There are five bidders for the upcoming Statue of Liberty ferry contract to be issued by the National Park Service. The contract will be awarded in October of 2020 for another 10 years.

The former ferry Ft. Warren, from Boston, is now the clubhouse of the marina at Brooklyn Bridge Park.

There’s a new ferry service between Tuckerton Seaport, Baymen’s Museum and Beach Haven, New Jersey. The Pohatcong II is a 30-ft pontoon vessel that can carry 24 passengers. The ferry is free and runs Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.

Other New York City News

It was a long, hot summer in the New York Harbor area this year. The harbor was busy as usual with ferries, tour boats, tugs, cruise ships, bulk carriers, tankers and barges.

In March, the Ballyhoo, a catamaran with a computer-generated billboard, got the attention of New York City and New York State legislators, who produced a bill banning such commercialization of the Hudson River. Governor Cuomo signed a law banning the use of electronic floating billboards. However, there are countersuits pending. September 6 was set as a court date to determine what might happen.

The fireboat James J. Harvey is back from Caddell Dry Dock after being repainted. Its color was changed from its dazzle camouflage red and white to its former traditional red and white fireboat color scheme.

NY Waterway is expected to take delivery of a newbuilding from Yank Marine in September. The vessel will be followed by two more of the same design as the Betsy Ross-class vessels.

Plenty of cruise ships made weekly runs from New York to Bermuda, New England and the Caribbean, along with transatlantic crossings.

Oceania Insignia received members of the New York and New Jersey Propeller Club for a July luncheon. The World Ship Society held a weeklong trip to Bermuda.

The cruise ship Celebrity Summit has been going to the Statue of Liberty before heading out to sea after departures from Liberty Cruise Terminal in Bayonne, New Jersey.

Donjon Marine is bucket-dredging Piers 88 and 90 North and South. The silt is being hauled off by the Atlantic Trader and Atlantic Enterprise.

The USCGC Eagle landed at Pier 86 with new cadets aboard for a weekend of visitors in August. The Navy League and
Long Island

Montauk Lighthouse will be getting a big makeover to be completed in 2021 at a cost of $1.1 million. The tower is over 111 feet tall and hasn’t been touched since it was built over 200 years ago.

Since late July, the replenishment of the beach from Fire Island Inlet to Moriches has been going through a staging process. The first stage consists of transporting dredging pipe from Bay Shore to Davis Park, Fire Island, by Fire Island ferries. Early August saw the Weeks hopper dredge RN Weeks arrive and start dredging. This work will continue until the end of November, with the project ending in Ocean Bay Park, Fire Island. It’s expected that 2.3 million cubic yards of sand will be put back on the beach.

A rail jumping occurred off the ferry Isle of Fire from Fire Island Ferries in Bay Shore, New York. The passenger jumped as a dare and is facing charges and a USCG fine of $2,500.

Davis Park Ferry has reported that the Glamping program at Watch Hill, Fire Island, has picked up ridership this year for the National Park ferry service.

Upstate News

The former NYC fireboat John D. McKean has been lifted out of the water for normal hull scraping and painting at North River Shipyard in Nyack, New York.

Solar, a passenger vessel that uses solar power entirely as propulsion, and is owned by the Hudson River Museum in Kingston, New York, was fully operational this past summer for tours.

The 20th Annual Waterford Tugboat Roundup took place in mid-September in Waterford, New York. △

the Propeller Club of New York and New Jersey gave out 1,600 bagels to the crew and cadets on the first day of the visit.

There are two new New York City Department of Environmental Protection vessels in the harbor. Tide Runner and Sea Robin were both built at Aluma Marine in Louisiana. They’re 30 feet long and use outboard engines for propulsion.

A new seawall is about to be constructed at the 207th Street Subway rail yard on the Harlem River for prevention of problems from Hurricane Sandy-type storms.

The Bayonne Bridge had a rededication ceremony on June 14. The bridge now has a 215-ft clearance. It originally opened in 1931.

The Army Corps of Engineers recently decommissioned its vessel Hudson, built in 1957. The Corps sank her off of Fire Island in an artificial reef. Remnants there include the last of the Kosciuszko Bridge from Newtown Creek.

Hudson River Park Trust has announced the creation of a beach in Manhattan at Gansevoort Peninsula along the shoreline of the Hudson River at Gansevoort Street. The seawall will be removed and people will actually be able to go swimming in the Hudson.

This year has resulted in many whale and dolphin sightings in Lower New York Bay.

The Annual New York Tugboat Race was held on Labor Day at Pier 86.

A Windfarm Seminar was held at SUNY Maritime on September 26.
Ship Swap for Newcastle-Amsterdam

Danish operator DFDS Seaways has long operated the overnight cruise ferry route from Newcastle in northern England to Ijmuiden, near Amsterdam in the Netherlands, with a pair of older ferries – the 1987-built King Seaways a) Nils Holgersson b) Val de Loire and 1986-built Princess Seaways a) Peter Pan b) Spirit of Tasmania c) Spirit d) Fjord Norway e) Princess of Norway.

In a somewhat unconventional move, DFDS has agreed to swap these two ships with two newer ferries from Italian operator Moby Lines, the 2005-built Moby Aki and 2001-built Moby Wonder. DFDS will take delivery of the new vessels, to be renamed Amsterdam Seaways and Newcastle Seaways, at the beginning of 2020. In addition to improved passenger facilities, the vessels will offer much-needed additional freight capacity.

Moby has experienced financial difficulties in recent years, so perhaps it was motivated to sell. The company has yet to announce plans for its new vessels, but they will join the aging fleet operating in Italian waters.

Bohus to Mediterranean

With the entrance into service of the brand-new ferry Color Hybrid, Norwegian operator Color Line has disposed of its veteran 1971-built Bohus a) Princess Desire b) Europafarjan c) Europafarjan II d) Lion Princess with a sale to an unnamed Mediterranean operator. Bohus has long been a stalwart of the short route across the mouth of the Oslo Fjord between Stromstad, Sweden, and Sandefjord, Norway, which is heavily dependent on duty-free sales, since Norway lies outside the European Union. Renamed Ionian Star, she left Norway for Greece on August 31, 2019.

End of the Line Nears for King’s Line?

Stena Line’s route between Trelleborg, Sweden, and Sassnitz, Germany, may be nearing the end of the line. Dubbed “Konigslinie” (“King’s Line”), the historic route is currently operated singlehandedly by the 1989-built Sassnitz, which formerly operated as a rail/passenger ferry before Stena discontinued the conveyance of rail cars a few years ago. Outside of the peak summer season, twice-daily service will be replaced by only one to four departures per week because most of the traffic has shifted to the nearby route between Trelleborg and Rostock, Germany.

Fast Ferry Wrecked

Spanish operator Balearia suffered a serious casualty in August when the 1992-built InCat high-speed catamaran Pinar del Rio a) HSC Patricia Olivia ran aground at the entrance to the port of Denia on the Spanish mainland while on a service from the Balearic Islands. Aside from a few minor bumps and bruises, the passengers and crew were unscathed, but Pinar del Rio was declared a total loss and will be scrapped on site. Readers from South Florida may remember her from several years spent on Balearia’s route between Port Everglades and the Bahamas.

Write Ted Blank at 1576 Grotto Street North, St Paul, MN 55117 or tedblank@hotmail.com
Ferry Worries

It has become quite apparent this past summer that ferry activity, both on the water and off, can provide more drama than most would bargain for.

In mid-August, a ferry with 84 people aboard ran aground in Boston Harbor near Long Island early one morning. Four passengers received minor injuries, resulting in emergency medical attention and care in various Boston hospitals. The U.S. Coast Guard and state and local rescue crews assisted. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority MV Lightning eventually made its way under its own power to dock in the Charlestown section of Boston. The Lightning’s captain has been placed on leave and ordered to take a drug test, as standard operating procedure, while the coast guard investigates. The ferry was travelling from Hull, Massachusetts, when it took evasive action to avoid colliding with a fishing boat. Boston Harbor Cruises operates the MBTA ferry under contract.

The ongoing soap opera that is the Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, to Bar Harbor, Maine, ferry took another twist when the operator announced that the intended service was being delayed yet again. Bay Ferries announced in mid-July that the new CAT ferry service would not begin until late summer at the earliest because of construction and regulatory delays at the Bar Harbor terminal. Yet, as of last September, the service was still in limbo. In the meantime, Bay Ferries is refunding all passenger deposits for last summer’s season.

Fortunate Ferries

On a happier note, the 1914-built, Moosehead Lake, Maine, running passenger ship and former ferry Katahdin, which narrowly escaped a serious engine fire in 2018, was scheduled to receive new engines and a generator this past October. The ferry, originally steam-powered, will see the new units replace her 62-year-old diesel engines. As a result of the intended work, her cruising season was scheduled to end October 5, nine days earlier than her usual Columbus Day end-of-season run.

Another former ferry, North America’s oldest operating steamship, RMS Segwun of Gravenhurst, Ontario, received the green light in late July to begin cruising again after passing inspection. As part of a five-year refurbishment program begun in 2018, her sailing schedule is being confined to July and August to allow for necessary repairs to much of her wooden superstructure. This reduced schedule will continue for the next few years. The 132-year-old iron-hulled Segwun usually sails from the Victoria Day weekend in late May to Canadian Thanksgiving in mid-October.

Historic Fireboat Spiffed Up

In other historic-ship news, the world’s oldest active fireboat, the 119-year-old Edward M. Cotter, came home to Buffalo in July after receiving a $500,000, two-month overhaul in Toronto. Repairing the steel hull and acquiring new propellers for the 118-ft Victorian vessel was vital to maintaining her icebreaking and firefighting capabilities. The state grant also covered shaft, rudder bearing and sea-chest valve replacements for the city-owned boat, which was five years overdue for refurbishment. Toronto Drydock Ltd. carried out the dry docking and repairs.

In 1996, the Cotter was designated a National Historic Landmark.

Autonomy is the Future

Leaving the Victorian-era fireboat behind, we cross over to remote-controlled fireboats and other autonomous vessels more akin to the Starship Enterprise. Boston-based Sea Machines Robotics, which had demonstrated the world’s first autonomous, remote-controlled fireboat in August 2018, showed off further such advances this past August in Portland, Maine, with a skimmer boat. The autonomous skimmer boat is designed to increase the safety, productivity and predictability of cleaning up marine oil spills. Vigor/Kvichak Marine Industries built the oil-containment vessel owned by Marine Spill Response Corp., whose autonomous characteristics were designed by SMR.
Its abilities were demonstrated before an audience of the U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration (MARAD) and naval, international, environmental, industry and other government representatives.

**The SMR-conducted** exercise in Portland Harbor included remotely deploying the on-board boom, skimmer belt and other response equipment.

“**THIS IS THE FUTURE** of the maritime industry. It’s safer, it’s faster, it’s more cost-effective,” said Richard Balzano, deputy administrator, MARAD. “This technology is here and it will make you a believer. We are here because we want to help the maritime industry evolve. It’s about safety, the environment and reducing risk on the water.”

**Similar SMR** perception and situational awareness technology is currently being tested aboard one of A.P. Moller - Maersk’s new ice-class container ships.

**CCG News**

**Changing course, in early August** the Canadian government announced that it will soon entertain bids for six new Canadian Coast Guard icebreakers. The vessels will service the St. Lawrence, Atlantic Canada, the Arctic and possibly the Great Lakes. Because Canada’s fleet of icebreakers is aging, the Coast Guard acquired three used vessels from Europe. But with this past October’s federal election and recent accusations of federal bias toward a Quebec shipyard, it’s anyone’s guess what the ultimate outcome will be.

**As previously reported** here, the Canadian Coast Guard cutter CCGS **Corporal McLaren**, which was criminally cut loose from its cradle while being refitted in November 2018, could be laid up until 2021. In August, the Coast Guard said damage to the vessel, which was sabotaged in Sambro, Nova Scotia, is believed to be “substantial.” Everything below the bridge deck was immersed in seawater, damaging computer equipment and rendering wiring useless for the 140-ft ship. Although no price tag has been given, preliminary estimates from the time of the incident were in the range of $5 million Canadian (about US $3.7 million). The $227-million Canadian, 2013-built Hero-class vessel was towed to the Bedford Institute of Oceanography in nearby Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, for repairs after crashing into the ocean.

**Magnetic Field Goes Haywire**

**Aside from human-made** global heating, another major environmental change is taking place that adversely affects maritime navigation. The Earth’s magnetic field, which affects all modern navigation from ship-steering systems to Google Maps, is causing the north magnetic pole to shift relatively quickly away from Canada toward Siberia. Consequently, the World Magnetic Model is being updated a year earlier than planned by geomagnetism experts. They’re taking into account shifting liquid deep within the earth’s core, which generates most of the magnetic field.

**Whales Pay for Cost of Doing Business**

**In response to North Atlantic** Right Whale deaths last summer, the Canadian government began handing out more speeding fines to Gulf of St. Lawrence ships that exceed 10 knots per hour.

**Ship collisions** are the leading cause of accidental deaths for the endangered species, which numbers about 400. **This past summer,** Transport Canada fined six ships, including two Canadian Coast Guard vessels. The CCGS **Cape Edensae** and CCGS **Cap d’Espoir** were fined $6,000 and $12,000 Canadian, respectively. A much larger, 4,056-TEU Panamax container ship, **MSC Diego,** also incurred a $12,000 Canadian fine for non-compliance. No doubt commercial shipping will see the fines as just a cost of doing business.

**As a result** of the new speed limits, more vessels were taking direct routes and shirking the established shipping lanes. Such action was taking many ships closer to known whale zones.

“**Vessels must transit** in a way that does not harm the endangered North Atlantic Right Whale population. When they exceed the set speed limits, we won’t hesitate to issue fines,” said Marc Garneau, federal Minister of Transport. 🌍

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MSC Diego was recently fined for “speeding.” (See “Whales Pay for Cost of Doing Business”) – Roddy Sergiades photo.
ALASKA

Budget Cuts for Alaska Marine Highway System

AFTER THE ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE cut approximately $38 million from the Alaska Marine Highway System’s budget, the ferry system was forced to lay up its largest ship, the 418-ft Columbia, at the beginning of September. The smaller ferries Malaspina and Matanuska will substitute for the larger ship, but with reduced sailings. The 1974-built Columbia had been operating Inside Passage routes from Ketchikan to Prince Rupert, British Columbia, and Bellingham, Washington.

FUNDING FOR THE AMHS system over the past fiscal year was $180.1 million, while the budget for this fiscal year was cut to $142.2 million. The ferry system, also hit by a labor strike in July over wages, is now conducting an economic restructuring analysis to determine which services can be saved and which will have to be either cut or reduced.

BESIDES THE 45-year-old Columbia, which suffered an engine breakdown in May, the fast ferries Fairweather and Chenega have also been taken out of service and will be sold following their replacement by the two new ferries Tazlina and Hubbard. The twin 15-year-old catamarans, which are capable of speeds greater than 30 knots, were built at a cost of $36 million each.

Cruise Growth

While the Alaska ferry system is having it troubles, the state’s cruise business continues to grow with a new record expected to be set for the 2019 season once final figures are in. Helping boost overall passenger numbers have been several new ships, including the largest vessel deployed in Alaska to date, the 4,180-passenger Ovation of the Seas, operated by Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.

CARNIVAL CORPORATION, which currently controls about 50 percent of the Alaska market, operated 17 ships in Alaskan waters over the year, with the 3,560-passenger Royal Princess being one of the largest. Cunard Line’s Queen Elizabeth also made a showing and offered several cruises before continuing on to the Caribbean via Panama in late summer.

Other notable arrivals included Azamara Club Cruises’ 686-passenger Azamara Quest, Norwegian Cruise Line’s Norwegian Joy and Viking Cruises’ Viking Spirit.

Even the remote port of Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian chain saw an increase in cruise traffic, with nearly 20 ship calls recorded in 2019 compared to only eight the previous year.

North Slope Tugs

Cook Inlet Tug & Barge, a subsidiary of Seattle-based Foss Maritime, started its first operations on Alaska’s North Slope in mid-July after having acquired all of Crowley Maritime’s assets at Prudhoe Bay last January. This included the three shallow-draft tugs Sag River, Kuparuk River and Kavik River, built in the early 1970s, which have been renamed Sag Wind, Kuparuk Wind and Kavik Wind. The three 64-ft by 27-ft boats are powered by Cat 343D engines driving three screws fit in tunnels to give a very shallow working draft of 3.4 feet.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Romanian-Built Ferries

STATE-SUPPORTED FERRY OPERATOR BC Ferries and privately-held Seaspan Ferries have four vessels under construction in Europe to serve regional routes in British Columbia. The Damen group’s yard at Galati, Romania, is completing two double-ended ferries for BC Ferries that incorporate diesel-electric hybrid propulsion systems and will serve the Northern Gulf Islands, where they’ll replace the 60-year-old North Island Princess and 54-year-old Howe Sound Queen.

The latter vessel has already been taken out of service and replaced by the 30-year-old Quadra Queen II, which underwent a $15-million-Canadian life extension in 2011. The two new Island-class ferries, each with a capacity for 300 passengers and 47 vehicles, will serve the Powell River–Texada Island route and the Port McNeill–Alert Bay–Sointula route.
BC Ferries handled 8.9 million vehicles and 22.3 million passengers over the past fiscal year, representing a year-over-year increase of 1.9 percent for vehicle traffic and 1.2 percent for passenger traffic. It currently serves 25 routes and 47 terminals using a fleet of 35 vessels.

Seaspan’s Hybrids

While Damen’s Galati yard is finishing two double-enders for BC Ferries, the Dutch company’s Mangalia yard is building two LNG-hybrid ro-ro ferries for the Seaspan Group’s commercial truck service between the lower BC mainland and Vancouver Island. The twin 149-meter-long vessels will offer 1,034 lane-meters of deck space and will be powered by MAN 35/44DF dual-fuel engines powering Schottel thrusters. To be classed by Bureau Veritas, the hybrid vessels are expected to go into operation alongside Seaspan’s existing hybrids Seaspan Swift and Seaspan Reliant, by early 2021.

Sir John Franklin

LeTTing EuterPean yards Take Care of its ferry needs, the Seaspan Group’s own yards in British Columbia have been busy with government work and delivered the Offshore Fisheries Science Vessel CCGS Sir John Franklin to the Canadian Coast Guard in June. This is the first large ship to be delivered to the Canadian government under its $35-billion-Canadian National Shipbuilding Strategy launched in 2011. The 208-ft research vessel took four years to complete because of an inherent stability problem, along with faulty welding during construction and repairs needed after it suffered damage during sea trials (see PowerShips No. 311). The vessel will be followed by sister ship CCGS Capt. Jacques Cartier and CCGS John Cabot.

Northern Sea Wolf

At the northern end of Vancouver Island, BC Ferries was able to place its second-hand ferry Northern Sea Wolf in service on the Port Hardy–Bella Coola route during May, following a longer and more expensive renovation project than originally envisioned. The 19-year-old vessel, which can carry 150 passengers and 35 cars, was fitted with a new galley, dining area, lounge, outdoor viewing area, washrooms, chair lifts and elevators at a cost of over $75 million Canadian, well beyond budget. However, it’s slightly faster than the Queen of Chilliwack, which was also a second-hand purchase, that had operated the Port Hardy–Bella Coola route until sold in 2015.

WASHINGTON Festive Fireboat

The former Seattle fireboat Duwamish celebrated its 110th birthday this past year as the second oldest fireboat in the United States (the oldest is the Buffalo Fire Department’s 1900-built Edward E. Now a floating museum on Seattle’s Lake Union, the 110-year-old Duwamish was considered the nation’s most powerful fireboat from 1909 to 2003, with a pumping capacity of 22,800 gallons per minute. (See “Festive Fireboat”) – J. Mabel photo.
M. Cotter at Buffalo, New York). Built by Seattle’s Richmond Beach Shipbuilding Company in 1909 as a steamer, the 322-grt Duwamish was rebuilt with a diesel/electric propulsion system in 1949.

The first fire fought by the 120-ft by 28-ft boat was on May 20, 1910, and the last on September 8, 1984. A month later, the vessel was retired and remains moored at Seattle’s Historic Ships Wharf on Lake Union, where it’s maintained by the Puget Sound Fireboat Foundation as both a National Historic Landmark and a City of Seattle Landmark.

Hyak Retired

Facing a somewhat similar budget problem as Alaska, Washington State Ferries was forced to retire one of its oldest vessels, the 51-year-old Hyak, at the end of June after the Washington State Legislature refused to allot more money to keep the aging ship running.

According to WSF Director of Government Relations John Vezina, 13 state-owned ferries are expected to be retired over the next 20 years, including Tillikum, which just celebrated its 60th birthday, along with Kalaloch, Yakima and Elwha, while 16 new ferries will be built.

The ferry system, the largest in the nation, is currently handling almost 25 million passengers annually with a fleet of 22 vessels.

Windmill Blade Record

Windmill blades used on turbine towers have become big business for several Pacific Coast ports, and in late June a new record was established at the Port of Vancouver, Washington, when 198 blades were discharged from the 10,480-dwt vessel Combi Dock I.

The blades were manufactured by Vestas in Italy and were destined for the Marengo windfarm near Dayton, Washington, where they will be used to re-blade existing turbines. They were transported from the port by truck for PacifiCorp, which brought in a second shipment of 153 blades and 11 turbine hubs later in the year.

Derelict Disposal

This past year, Washington State’s Department of Natural Resources began dismantling a number of abandoned vessels under its derelict vessel removal program, including two tugboats, two sailboats and a cabin cruiser. According to the program’s manager, Troy Wood, there are currently 154 vessels on the DNR’s “vessels of concern” list, but only about $24,000 left in the agency’s current budget to deal with them.

Funded by recreational and commercial vessel fees, along with revenue from state-owned aquatic leases, the removal program gets approximately $2 million every two years to dispose of derelicts, but it must prioritize them as to how much of a risk they pose to the environment and to public safety. Unfortunately, boats are being abandoned by their owners at a greater rate than state resources can deal with.

Oregon Washed Ashore

The state of Oregon found itself with a somewhat similar problem in May when the hulk of the 64-ft Washington-registered commercial fishing boat Ann Kathleen washed ashore near Bandon, Oregon. The fire-damaged vessel had earlier been abandoned at sea by its crew of four, who were rescued by a nearby boat with no reported injuries or pollution.

However, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Coast Guard were called upon to remove more than 1,000 gallons of fuel still inside the ship’s hull when it washed up on the beach. Cleanup and disposal of the wreckage was then undertaken by Global Dive and Salvage, with the boat’s owner and insurer expected to pay for most of the costs.
Second ATB Barge

The Gunderson Marine yard at Portland, Oregon, has been contracted by New York-based Overseas Shipholding Group to build a second 204,000-barrel-capacity ATB barge for delivery later this year. It will be paired with one of OSG’s existing tugboats and will replace an older barge that will be phased out of service. The twin 581-ft-long tank barges, to comply with MARPOL Annex VI Regulation 13 Tier III standards, will be among the largest vessels ever completed by Gunderson.

CALIFORNIA

Blue & Gold Fleet Turns 40

San Francisco tour and ferry operator Blue & Gold Fleet has been celebrating its 40th anniversary after having been established by Bay Area residents Roger Murphy and Warren Simmons in 1979. In 1989, the company played a major role in providing emergency transportation services following the Loma Prieta earthquake. Because of that experience, the company was later chosen as operator of the Water Emergency Transportation Authority ferries, which now connect downtown San Francisco with a number of outlying Bay Area communities. The company carries approximately 4 million passengers annually using a fleet of 20 vessels.

“K” Line’s Gold Award

Japan’s “K” Line has been given a gold award by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for its participation in the voluntary Vessel Speed Reduction program off California. The goal of the program is to protect whales in the Santa Barbara Channel and San Francisco Bay areas. According to NOAA, “K” Line ships achieved a very high compliance rate of over 90 percent last year. Unfortunately, the Japanese carrier lost $895 million in its most recent fiscal year and is now trimming its fleet of a number of ships.

Lurline Delivered

Matson has placed its latest Lurline in service following the 879-ft by 114-ft vessel’s completion by San Diego’s NASSCO as the largest ConRo ever built in the United States. Like sister ship Matsonia, to be delivered later this year, Lurline has been configured for LNG fuel use in the future and has a cargo capacity of 3,500 TEUs and 800 vehicles.

USNS Miguel Keith

NASSCO has handed over the USNS Miguel Keith (ESB 5), a Montford Point-class Expeditionary Sea Base vessel, to the U.S. Navy following repairs to damage suffered over a year ago when its dry dock accidentally flooded. The incident occurred when a barrier to keep water out of the dock suddenly collapsed (see PowerShips No.308).

New Navy Oilers

NASSCO has laid the keel for the future USNS John Lewis (T-AO
New Vessels

The second of McKiel Marine’s 2018 tanker acquisitions arrived in Canada during this news cycle. The Turquoise I, Turquoise T, Topaz I, Topaz T, MT Topaz T, Topaz T, Topaz I XO, Topaz T, which was renamed Hinch Spirit during the previous news cycle, reached the country in late July and was rechristened Wicky Spirit at Hamilton, Ontario, in early August. The 2008-built oil/chemical tanker is intended to service the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence and eastern seaboard, but one of its early voyages was to Ijmuiden, Holland. Since both vessels will service Petro-Canada Lubricants, which partners with Schmidt Peterson Motorsports in the American Indycar series, both vessels honor Canadian-born Indycar drivers – Hinch Spirit honors James Hinchcliffe and Wicky Spirit honors Robert Wickens.

Two Christenings

In a festive celebration at Toledo, Ohio, on June 21, two Great Lakes Towing tugs, both named Ohio, were honored for very different reasons. The recently completed Ohio was christened, and it’s the second Damen Shipyards Group-designed Stan Tug 1907 ICE-class tug built by Great Lakes Shipyard for Great Lakes Towing – the first being named Cleveland. The tug measures 64 feet in length and is powered by a 1,000 diesel engine. Once in service, the vessel is intended to service the Port of Toledo. This tug is the second of a planned five new Damen Stan tugs that are scheduled to enter service by the end of 2020.

In the same ceremony, the 1903-built tug Ohio a) M.F.D No. 15 b) Laurence C. Turner, looking resplendent in a new coat of paint, was dedicated as a static display at the National Museum of the Great Lakes. In 2018, Great Lakes Towing donated the retired tug to the museum because it wasn’t realistic to modernize it to meet Subchapter M restrictions. A detailed description of the vessel was carried in the Spring 2019 PowerShips “Great Lakes/Seaway News column.”

Write James L. Shaw at Shaw11055@comcast.net or 11466 SE Hidalgo Ct., Clackamas, OR 97105

Wicky Spirit in Hamilton, Ontario, on August 11, 2019. (See “New Vessels”) – Jeff Cameron photo.
Tug Michigan Enters Service

Great Lakes Towing christened its third Damen Shipyards Group-designed Stan Tug 1907 ICE-class tug for its lakes service on July 22. This vessel was christened Michigan as part of a celebration of the company’s 120-year history. Great Lakes Towing’s fourth Stan Tug 1907 ICE-class tug, named Pennsylvania, is scheduled to be delivered in October 2019, and its fifth tug is slated to join the fleet in 2020.

Since the implementation of Subchapter M regulations, Great Lakes Towing, the largest owner and operator of Great Lakes-based, American-flagged tugboats, has been devising a plan to modernize its existing fleet, and that plan is now beginning to take shape. Along with the five new Damen-designed Stan tugs described above, we now know the names of a few tugs that are being upgraded to meet the new regulations and a few that are being scrapped.

On July 10, Great Lakes Towing announced that six existing tugs have received U.S. Coast Guard Certificates of Inspection and are compliant with Subchapter M regulations. These tugs are the Colorado; Iowa; Missouri; a) Rogers City b) Dolomite c) Chippewa; Nebraska; New Jersey a) New Jersey b) Petko; and Wyoming. Unfortunately, several tugs have been retired and scrapped, or are awaiting scrapping at Cleveland, including the 1926-built California, 1931-built Idaho, the 1921-built Maine a) Maine b) Saipan c) Hillsboro, the 1911-built Pennsylvania, and the 1925-built South Carolina a) Welcome b) Joseph H. Callan c) South Carolina d) Talagi. The entire fleet is scheduled to be compliant by 2022.

Latest Scrapping

After a survey held at Ironhead Marine in Toledo, Ohio, revealed the need for repairs that were deemed economically unjustified, Canada Steamship Lines’ bulker Cedarglen a) Ems Ore b) Montciffe Hall c) Cartierdoc was retired from service. The vessel sailed from Toledo under its own power and laid up for the last time in Montreal on May 18. Sporting the name Eda, it departed Montreal for Aliaga, Turkey, on July 21 in tow of the tug VB Hispania a) Triton Responder b) Oceanus c) Fairplay 32 d) VR Hispania e) VB Hispania BB f) VB Hiqp g) VB Hispan.

Cedarglen began life as the deep-sea ore carrier Ems Ore and was acquired by Hall Corporation Shipping in 1976. The vessel was rebuilt as a Seaway-sized bulker and entered service in April 1979. It spent time in the N. M. Paterson & Sons fleet as Cartierdoc before being sold to Canada Steamship Lines and renamed Cedarglen in 2002.

Great Lakes Tugs

Toronto Drydock has purchased the tug Omni-Richelieu a) Port Alfred II from Groupe Ocean during this news cycle. The tug was built in Pictou, Nova Scotia, in 1969 as Port Alfred II for Alcan of Port Alfred, Quebec. The vessel was sold to Sorel Tug Boats and renamed Omni-Richelieu in 1982. Ocean Group eventually acquired the tug and it has most recently been stationed at Hamilton, Ontario.

Cedarglen transits the Welland Canal in October 2016. (See “Latest Scrapping”) – Mark Shumaker photo.
CRT Construction of Lévis, Quebec, purchased the shallow-draft tug *Meander* during this news cycle. The tug was built in the Netherlands in 2006 and was acquired this May. It arrived in Quebec City under its own power on June 13. The tug is intended to tow barges between Chisasibi and Inukjuak on the east coast of Hudson's Bay.

**Summer Heroics**

During this news cycle, two commercial vessels assisted vacationers who got into trouble around the Great Lakes this summer.

The self-unloader *Michipicoten* a) Elton Hoyt 2nd successfully rescued a jet skier from the middle of Lake Superior during the night of July 8. While approximately 25 miles south of Isle Royale, the big ship received a call from the United States Coast Guard informing the crew of a missing man on a jet ski possibly in their vicinity. After searching the darkness for nearly three hours with assistance from a USCG-dispatched helicopter, the man and jet ski were found and taken aboard. *Michipicoten* continued on its trip to Sault Ste. Marie, where the passenger and his small water craft were put ashore.

Star Line Mackinaw Island Ferry’s *Joliet* rescued a four-year-old from the Straights of Mackinaw after she floated away from shore in an inner tube on July 22. Luckily, the ferry was docked at Mackinaw City when the crew heard the commotion. The *Joliet* sped out and rescued the girl approximately one-quarter mile from shore. Thankfully, the girl was scared and cold but otherwise unharmed.

**New Tonnage Record**

As a result of the continually increasing water levels throughout the Great Lakes region, vessels are loading larger and larger cargoes. Two American Steamship Company fleetmates broke the existing record of 75,095 net tons of cargo carried on the Great Lakes when *Walter J. McCarthy Jr.* a) *Belle River* and *American Integrity* a) *Lewis Wilson Foy* b) *Oglebay Norton* locked down at Sault Ste. Marie on July 8 carrying 75,387 net tons and 76,063 net tons respectively. Later in July, *American Integrity* broke its own record when it carried 76,358 net tons of taconite pellets. The current record was achieved on August 8 when *Indiana Harbor* cleared the St. Marys River carrying 76,930.5 net tons of iron ore pellets. Because of the increased water levels, *Indiana Harbor*’s draft was 30 feet.

**Casualties**

Because of a large wave from a passing yacht, Algoma Central’s self-unloader *Algoma Niagara* broke from its Windsor, Ontario, moorings on June 16 and stranded across the Canadian shipping channel on the Detroit River. When the mooring lines broke, the captain quickly lowered the vessel’s anchors, but the strong current pushed its bow 90 degrees from shore, where it stopped close to the Kinder Morgan pipeline, which carries ethane below the Detroit River. Thankfully, the pipeline wasn’t damaged during the incident, which closed the Canadian channel for 30 hours. Because of the proximity to the pipeline, the anchor chains were cut while two tugs held the ship in place, then slowly assisted it back along the dock.

We’re sad to report the death of a 20-year-old passenger who fell overboard from the Owen Sound Transportation Company ferry *Chi-Cheemaun* on June 21. Police reported that the woman’s remains were found with the assistance of the Canadian Coast Guard the following day. The Manitoulin Ontario Provincial Police released a statement claiming that the young woman jumped overboard. From spring through fall, *Chi-Cheemaun* connects South Baymouth on Manitoulin Island to Tobermory on the Bruce Peninsula.

**Highland Eagle Visits Great Lakes**

Contracted by Enbridge Inc., the Gulf Offshore-owned offshore supply vessel *Highland Eagle* is spending the summer conducting pre-construction work for Enbridge’s new pipeline scheduled to be laid across the Straits of Mackinaw. Throughout the summer, *Highland Eagle*’s equipment drilled and collected sediment and rock samples in order to determine how easily a proposed concrete tunnel containing a new pipeline can be constructed. In 2018, the VanEnkevort Tug and Barge’s self-unloading barge *Erie Trader* dragged its anchor along the bottom of the straits, denting Enbridge’s Line 5 petroleum pipeline. Line 5 has long carried propane and oil products between Michigan’s Upper and Lower Peninsulas.
Hurricane Dorian Disrupts Numerous Cruises

As Hurricane Dorian reached Category 5 status over the Northern Bahamas in late August and early September, numerous cruises were disrupted, causing altered itineraries and even complete cancellations. Ports from Miami all the way up through Charleston, South Carolina, were closed, forcing ships to wait out the storm in locations hundreds of miles away. The hurricane was a slow mover, taking nearly two weeks to clear the Bahamas and move north.

The ships and schedules of Carnival, Norwegian, Royal Caribbean, Disney, MSC and Bahamas Paradise were all affected, and tens of thousands of passengers had their fares refunded because of canceled sailings. The dozens of alterations and cancellations are too many to detail here, but it was a logistical nightmare for cruise operations.

Once the storm had passed to the north, ships were able to return to their home ports and resume cruises. Many of these ships were immediately loaded with tons of food, water, equipment and various supplies to carry to the Bahamas, parts of which were devastated. Some lines, like Bahamas Paradise Cruise Line and Balearia Caribbean, were unable to resume normal operations since their trade is to Grand Bahama Island, which suffered intense damage. But the vessels Jaume I and Grand Celebration engaged in humanitarian work, carrying displaced Bahamians from Florida back to Freeport, and also carrying homeless Bahamians from Freeport to Florida.

Comfort in Miami

The U.S. Hospital Ship Comfort (T-AH-20) was at PortMiami on June 18 to host a media event and press conference about her current mission to South America, Central America and the Caribbean. Vice President Mike Pence was the keynote speaker.
The Comfort then sailed south from the port for a five-month medical assistance mission, with scheduled stops in Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis. The ship’s medical teams provide care both on board and at shore-side medical sites, helping to relieve the pressure on various national medical systems strained by an increase in displaced Venezuelans. The region is currently experiencing a worsening humanitarian crisis due to the ongoing political and economic instability in Venezuela.

The USNS Comfort was originally built as the tanker SS Rose City in 1976. In 1987, she was delivered to the U.S. Navy and rebuilt as a hospital ship. Although owned by the Navy, the ship is non-commissioned and is operated by 63 civilians from the Military Sealift Command. There are approximately 956 naval hospital staff, 258 naval support staff, and beds for up to 1,000 patients. The ship measures 964 feet in length and is just over 70,000 gross tons. She’s a steamship, with her single shaft and propeller powered by two boilers and two GE turbines.

USS Paul Ignatius Commissioned at Port Everglades

The guided missile destroyer USS Paul Ignatius (DDG-117) was formally commissioned into service at Port Everglades on July 27. She is the 67th Arleigh Burke-class destroyer. Ignatius is the sixth U.S. Navy vessel to be commissioned at this port.

The commissioning of this ship had great historical significance because she was only the second destroyer to be commissioned with the honoree, her namesake, present at the ceremony. (Arleigh Burke was the first.) Paul Ignatius, who served with honor as a commissioned lieutenant in the U.S. Navy during World War II, also served as a U.S. Secretary of the Navy under President Lyndon B. Johnson from 1967 to 1969.

The Paul Ignatius is 513 feet long, with a beam of 66 feet. Her speed is over 30 knots and she accommodates a crew of 304 sailors.

Mayport Ferry Out of Service for Repairs

The St. John’s River ferry Jean Ribault was pulled out of service in late July due to a mechanical issue, according to the Jacksonville (Florida) Transportation Authority. What at first appeared to be a “minor operational issue” became a more substantial problem when it was discovered that the ferry’s propeller system had been damaged by a submerged rope. The vessel was put into dry dock for repairs and further inspections by the U.S. Coast Guard before returning to service a little more than two weeks later.

Mayport, Florida, ferry Jean Ribault returns to service in August 2019 after damage to its propeller shaft is repaired. (See “Mayport Ferry Out of Service for Repairs”) – Frank Manwell photo.
The St. John’s River ferry normally connects the north and south ends of Florida highway A1A with daily service every 30 minutes. It carries cars and passengers about one mile across the river between Mayport Village and Fort George Island, Florida. With the ferry out of service, motorists were forced to drive a 24-mile detour to get between these destinations.

Port Tampa Bay Welcomes Direct Container Service from Asia

Port Tampa Bay marked a major milestone in June with the inaugural call of the CMA CGM Dalila at the Ports America Terminal; this was the largest container ship to ever call at the port. CMA CGM is a leading worldwide shipping group with a fleet of 511 vessels serving 420 ports in 160 countries. This new weekly service to Tampa is direct from ports in Asia; a key to this arrangement was the port’s acquisition of new post-Panamax gantry cranes, which coincided with the expansion of the Panama Canal. As a result, this allows for larger ships to serve ports in the Gulf region.

Celebrity Returns to Tampa

Celebrity Cruises has announced that it will return to cruising from Tampa for the winter 2020-21 season; the premium cruise line last sailed from that port in 2007. The Celebrity Constellation will be based at the Gulf port and will offer a series of 10- and 11-night roundtrip sailings. Ports of call will be in the Eastern, Southern and Western Caribbean. Also included will be some Touch Canal itineraries in which the ship enters the Panama Canal and then returns. The 91,000-ton Celebrity Constellation originally entered service in 2001. In May of 2020, she is scheduled to undergo a “revolutionary” modernization, incorporating a number of features from Celebrity’s Edge-class ships.

Majesty of the Seas to Homeport in New Orleans

Royal Caribbean International’s Majesty of the Seas, recently displaced and made redundant in the Florida market when cruises to Cuba were banned, will be homeported year-round in New Orleans beginning in January of 2020. The ship will operate seven-night cruises from New Orleans to Coco Cay, Bahamas, as well as to Belize and Mexico.

When the Majesty first entered service in 1992, she was one of the largest ships in the world, at nearly 74,000 grt and a capacity for 2,700 passengers. Nowadays this is relatively small in the mass market of the cruise industry.

Port NOLA reported a record 1.18 million cruise passenger movements (total embarkations and debarkations) in 2018, with 235 ship calls. With the addition of Majesty of the Seas, the Port anticipates 1.45 million passenger movements and 341 ship calls annually.

Hurricane Barry Alters Sailings

Hurricane Barry, looming off the coast of Louisiana before coming ashore in July, affected the sailings of a number of cruise ships based in New Orleans.

Carnival Valor ended a cruise in Mobile, Alabama, instead of her homeport New Orleans, and her next cruise thus departed from Mobile, with passengers bussed in both directions from and to the ship. Valor was able to return to New Orleans several days later after the second cruise had finished. American Cruise Lines was able to change its planned departure point from New Orleans to Natchez, Mississippi.

Carnival Vista Woes

Carnival Vista underwent repairs aboard the heavy-lift vessel Boka Vanguard in July 2019. – Royal Boskalis photo.

Carnival Vista, based in Galveston, Texas, suffered technical problems with the bearings in one of her Azipods in June. This affected the ship’s speed, causing her to modify her planned itinerary with substituted ports of call for several sailings. Arrangements were made to replace all four bearings on Vista’s two Azipods in July, but her regular dry dock at Grand Bahama Island was still out of commission,
due to an earlier accident involving Oasis of the Seas in that location. Consequently, a Dutch floating dry dock was brought in to accommodate the ship for her repairs.

**The Dutch Boskalis Boka Vanguard**, the world’s largest semi-submersible heavy-lift ship, served as a platform for Carnival Vista. Several of Vista’s cruises were canceled during this time, and the 133,550-grt ship returned to regular service from Galveston after about three weeks.

**Universal Africa Lines to Call at Port Houston**

**Universal Africa Lines**, a conventional ocean transportation carrier that specializes in handling project cargo, breakbulk and containers, has begun calling at Port Houston’s City Docks as part of its service between the U.S. Gulf/Mexico and West Africa. The first regular call was from the MV MarMalaia on July 10.

**Universal Africa Lines** offers two to three sailings a month direct from Houston to West Africa. The company specializes in servicing the oil and gas industry, which makes it a good fit for Houston.

**Port Houston Secures New Mediterranean/Caribbean Service**

**Port Houston** hosted the maiden call in July of a new, direct service that the global ocean carrier CMA CGM has launched with Marfret. The MedCaribe service will connect Houston, its only U.S. port, with Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and the Mediterranean markets. The first vessel, the containership Spirit of Melbourne, called at the port’s Bayport Container Terminal on July 15.

**A special shout-out** of thanks to Frank Manwell for his contributions and support of this column!

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**Passenger & Cruise Ships May to August 2019**

**Carnival Spirit, Pacific Dawn, Pacific Eden, Pacific Explore and Sea Princess.**

**Passenger Ship Cruise News**

Additional ships are cruising out of Australia to New Zealand and Southwest Pacific ports that include Tasmania, New Guinea and Asia. Two older P&O ships have left Australia, one now cruising out of India and the former Pacific Eden cruising out of Europe during the northern hemisphere summer. Both ships will return to Australia later this year under new ownership.

**Windstar Cruises** is basing its Wind Breeze in Southern Hemisphere waters. **Royal Caribbean Lines** is basing Serenade of the Seas out of Sydney. Sister ship Radiance of the Seas will use the new cruise terminal currently under construction in Brisbane.

**MSC Cruises** seems to be scheduling at least one southern hemisphere cruise to include Australia. **MSC Magnifica** visited Australia in 2019.

**Cruise Industry**

**With the trade sanctions** between America and China affecting currency worldwide, Australia is seen as a bonanza because the Australian dollar equates to less than 67 cents American.

**Ferries**

**Ferry service out of the Perth Metropolitan region in Western Australia now includes new facilities at Burswood, which covers the casino and football stadium.**

**A new ferry** under construction for Brisbane’s City Cat Service will have double-deck accommodation.

**Sydney Ferries** has awarded the operation of the New South Wales Government ferries’ Sydney Harbour services to TransDev until 2028. The original contract was from 2012 till the end of 2018.

**New Zealand**

**With the regretful closure of the New Zealand Ship & Marine**
Society after 70 years, the Australian World Ship Society local branches and the Nautical Association of Australia will endeavor to provide coverage of New Zealand maritime activities.

The New Zealand Government is looking to replace its Cook Strait inter-island service with new and larger ferries, which will also carry rail freight wagons.

Pacific Islands News

A former Norwegian fjord vessel found its way to Geelong, Victoria, for a proposed service that never came to be. Then known as the Queen of Melbourne, it found a new career in Suva, Fiji.

Another Japanese vehicle ferry, Ferry Azusa, has been purchased for services out of Suva, Fiji, as Lomaiviti Princess VIII, arriving at Suva June 22. The ship, which can carry 350 passenger and 43 vehicles, is the second Japanese-purchased ferry added to Goundar Shipping, replacing older vessels that have been retired or ceased operation.

Port News

The tug ALP Winger arrived at Port Kembla, New South Wales, to tow the Iron Chieftain to the breakers. The self-discharge vessel's discharge equipment caught fire, rendering the ship inoperable. It remained in port awaiting a decision on its future. The Chinese government, which originally banned the vessel, arranged for it to be sent to Turkey for demolition.

Tug Talk

Two new Damen tugs constructed in Turkey have replaced older tonnage at Fremantle and Port Kembla. Svitzer is moving a number of tugs to new locations and replacing older tugs at other locations as Engage Marine continues to take market share from Svitzer at Sydney, Port Botany and Geelong.

Naval

Australia will join in the coalition of forces to provide naval and air services in the Middle East, especially in the Strait of Hormuz. HMAS Toowoomba and a naval surveillance aircraft will join the coalition against Iran. Two new naval tankers are under construction in Spain and will replace two older ships that have been withdrawn.

Container Ships

Larger container ships, especially those owned or chartered by MSC and Maersk, are not visiting Australian ports. The Port of Melbourne has allowed larger container ships to transit the River Yarra. Since it’s the largest container port in Australia, it serves as a barometer for the type and size of box boats entering Australian ports.

Live Sheep Trade

Small and medium sheep ships continue to move live sheep and cattle out of Australia during the southern hemisphere winter, which will decrease the number of sheep dying at sea.

Shipping News – General

Along with New Zealand, Australia sees its destiny as providing goods and services to the Southwest Pacific island nations. Australia is planning to build a naval base in East Timor and one at Honiara.

Note: Our PowerShips Southwest Pacific editor spent most of the past three months in the hospital. He entered the hospital on May 10 and had two additional visits, totaling eight weeks. He returned home on August 30 and used some of his recovery time preparing this column. Now that's dedication. Get well quickly, Bill! – Peter T. Eisele, Associate Editor

Write William G.T. Barber

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Eagle Sky inbound to Port of Geelong to load woodchip. – Bill Barber photo.
**Flooding Woes**

**HIGH, SWIFT WATER PLAGUED THE** Upper Mississippi, Illinois, Kaskaskia and Arkansas rivers from April through July, resulting in the closure of various locks to commercial navigation for one or more days. During July 2019, a round trip barge movement between Chicago and St. Louis took 30 days instead of 10 days.

**THE TENNESSEE** Tombigbee Waterway, after being closed in late February 2019 because of shoaling resulting from flooding, reopened on May 21, the dredges *Mike Hook* and *E. Stroud* having cleared a 150-ft-wide by 9-ft-deep navigational channel. The bar removed at Aberdeen alone totaled 400,000 cubic yards of silt; this yardage equals the average amount of spoils removed from the Tenn-Tom during a normal dredging year.

**THIS YEAR’S** record flooding has also caused silting on the Lower Mississippi River. Three hopper dredges, *Newport*, *Stuyvesant* and *Wheeler*, are working around the clock to maintain a 44-ft navigational channel at Southwest Pass and at Head of Passes. Spoils removed by these dredges are being used to build wetlands in the area.

**THE ATCHAFALAYA** River has also experienced periods of closure due to sediment clogging its navigation channels. The dredge *R.F. White* has spent her time since February 2019 removing various sandbars from the Atchafalaya that regenerate themselves once the dredge moves to another site.

**ON THE UMR**, the dredge *Goetz* has removed some 60,000 cubic yards of material in order to restore the navigation channel at Lake City, Minnesota.

**AMHERST MADISON** has been using three clamshell cranes, mounted on barges, to remove sediment buildup in the lower reaches of the Big Sandy River. The Big Sandy forms the water boundary between Kentucky and West Virginia.

**THE MISSOURI** River runoff, during the first six months of 2019, has been way above average, with the result that the river, at times, was closed to navigation because of wide-scale flooding.

**AMERICAN COMMERCIAL BARGE Line** reported at the end of June that it had laid up 14 towboats and 695 barges because of lack of business caused by high water on the Western Rivers.

**SINCE MAY 2019**, Southern Illinois Transfer has had its 1,500-hp *Karl E. Johnson* trapped on the Kaskaskia River at Mile 8, unable to pass under the bridge there because of high water.

**Corps Business**

**THE CORPS ISSUED CONTRACTS TO replace the Tow Haulage Systems during 2019 and 2020 at the following UMR locks and dams: #4, #5, #5A, #7, #8, and #9.** The Tow Haulage System is used to assist upriver-bound 1,200-ft tows through the 600-ft lock chamber. The traveling mooring bitt system, located on the upper guide walls, is used to assist barges through the lock that have been separated from their tow because of the length of the tow not fitting as one unit into the lock. Each tow haulage system is built around a “mechanical mule” that rides on rails on the upper guide wall. The tow haulage system at Lock & Dam #6 was replaced in 2018.

**IN JULY 2019**, the Corps started demolition of Ohio River Lock & Dam #52. Removal of the dam and lock is expected to be completed by December 2020. Lock & Dam #52 was supposed to have been taken out of service in 2010, but delays in financing the completion of Olmsted Lock & Dam pushed back its removal date. Olmsted, because of uneven funding, cost $3 billion and not the estimated $775 million. It has been noted that the cost of rebuilding seven UMR locks and dams, authorized in 2008 but not yet funded, has increased by 50 percent.
Few Worries about Subchapter M

Subchapter M reached its one-year milestone in July 2019. Many of the worries that towboat operators had about its implementation have not come to pass. Those issues raised by the towboat owners during the course of the year have generally been resolved to the towboat industry’s satisfaction.

As of July 24, 2019, some 915 Certificates of Inspection have been issued and an additional 450 COIs are being processed. Some 90 percent of the towboat industry has chosen the Towboat Safety Management System as the method by which they comply with Subchapter M. The use of TSMS moves the burden of actual vessel inspection from the Coast Guard to a certified third party. The Coast Guard workload of vessel inspections is therefore reduced since it now only has the responsibility of certifying and supervising the TSMS inspectors.

Coast Guard Regulations

Because of traffic congestion at the junction of the Monongahela, Allegheny and Ohio rivers, the Coast Guard is preparing orders to ban the loitering, anchoring, stopping, mooring or drifting of any vessel more than 100 feet from the riverbanks.

The Coast Guard has warned mariners that, while the use of marijuana is legal in a number of states, the presence of it in crew members’ urine samples will lead to loss of their marine credentials. These marine credentials can only be regained after the mariners have completed a drug rehabilitation course and undergone a year of testing that shows no use of any prohibited drug.

Computer Problems

The National Maritime Center, located in Huntington, West Virginia, is experiencing technical difficulties in issuing documents required by towboat crew members to work on the Western Rivers. Its computer system was installed in the early 1990s and is in need of replacement. Congress, however, has not allocated NMC any money to purchase a new IT system. There’s a possibility that, instead of only part of the paperwork moving through NMC being of the pen and ink variety, all will have to be completed in hard copy.

Barge Industry Hurting

The Western Rivers’ barge industry is concerned with its long-term health. The movement of both coal and grain by barge continues to decline. These two commodities in the past accounted for 50 percent of the movement of goods by barge. Therefore, there is a need to scrap part of the existing open and covered bulk hopper barge fleet because it’s too large for the cargo seeking to be moved.

During 2019, the average ton miles for barge movements decreased and barge rates have remained below average. Movement of coal on the Cumberland River has fallen from 12 million tons in 2009 to 7 million tons in 2017, while coal movement on the Tennessee River has declined from 25 million tons in 2009 to 10 million tons in 2017. In February 2019, the Western River barge industry moved 10 million tons of coal, down 5 percent from the same time period in 2018. Overall movement of grain by barge, as of July 31, 2019, when compared to the same date in 2018, had declined from 22,657,000 tons.
to 15,193,000 tons. Movement of corn had fallen from 14,419,000 tons to 7,649,000 tons, and soybeans from 7,072,000 tons to 6,354,000 tons.

Marine Builders of Utica, Indiana, after 40 years of building towboats, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Over the years, the company designed and built over 100 vessels. They stated that they were filing for bankruptcy because of the decline in movement of coal on the Western Rivers, which has led to a lack of orders for barges and towboats.

**Museum Needs New Home**

The Point Pleasant, West Virginia, River Museum, which caught fire on July 1, 2015, is seeking a new home. Repair of the burnt museum building isn’t considered worth the cost. Instead, the museum is seeking to build a new building near its present location.

Over the years, my granddaughter and I have spent many a pleasant hour navigating boats from the bridge of the museum’s computer-simulated pilot house. A day at a maritime museum with your children or grandchildren is the foundation of pleasant memories.

**Get It While You Can**

In 1942, the U.S. Navy established a 43-acre inland shipyard on the Ohio River at Evansville, Indiana. Between 1942 and 1945, the shipyard launched 167 LSTs and 23 other ships. Closed in 1946, the site of the shipyard has been converted over the years for other uses. The only shipyard item remaining is the fitting-out crane. The crane has been offered for free to a number of organizations, but the cost of moving it is prohibitive. If the crane isn’t moved by 2020, it will be cut up for scrap.

**Briefs**

- Harley Marine Gulf is quitting the Western River towboat and barge industry and is in the process of selling off its fleet of towboats and barges.

The 3,000-hp *Duke* and the 3,000-hp *Champion* were sold to Campbell Transportation, and the 2,000-hp *Silver* and the 2,000-hp *Diablo* were sold to Canal Barge. *Silver* has been renamed Hallie M. Merrick and *Diablo* is now Liz Sloss.

- CC Industries has bought Southern Towing Company of Memphis, Tennessee, and its fleet of 25 towboats and 75 liquid tank barges.

- Gulf Island Fabrication of Houma, Louisiana, is working on converting the casino boat *Kanesville Queen* into a 245-passenger river cruise boat to be named *American Countess*. She’s being lengthened 60 feet and, upon completion, will be 317 feet long with a beam of 78 feet. She is to enter service in 2020.

- On May 24, 2019, two barges broke loose on the Arkansas River when the trees they were tied to fell into the river. The barges then floated downstream and sank after striking Lock & Dam #16. Both barges were later recovered.

- On June 13, 2019, Montgomery Lock & Dam at Mile 32 on the Ohio River was temporarily closed after a barge allided with the sill wall, damaging the wall.

- On June 16, 2019, the Marshall Island-flagged 29,324-ton tanker *Dank Silver*, while bound down the LMR, allided with the Sunshine Bridge pier at Mile 167.4. The bridge was temporarily closed for inspection.

- On July 3, 2019, current entering a 5,000-ft-long breach in the levee at Mile 25 on the UMR broke six barges free from their tow and carried them through the levee into the farm fields beyond. The barges weren’t damaged, and all six were eventually recovered and returned to the river.

- On July 7, 2019, three towboats and a deck barge sank at Mile 21 on the Illinois River. The towboats, 650-hp *Mary Fern*, 800-hp *Mary R* and 800-hp *Teddi B.*, were tied up to a deck barge.

The barge sprang a leak and, in sinking, pulled the three towboats under. The towboats and barge had been recently bought by a private individual at an estate sale.

- On July 9, 2019, UMR Lock #15 was closed when a Canadian National Railroad train derailed on the bridge across the Mississippi River at Davenport, Iowa. The bridge’s swing section wasn’t repaired until July 11.

- The Ohio River Sistersville Ferry didn’t operate during 2019 because her pilot quit for another river-based job. This ferry connects Sistersville, West Virginia, to Ohio. The community is advertising for a new pilot to operate the ferry and hopes to return it to service in 2020.

- Excell Marine has added the *Jacie E*, a 1953-built, 3,000-hp towboat, to its fleet.

- Bellaire Harbor Service, of Bellaire, Ohio, has purchased the 1975-built, 750-hp *Mary B*. This has increased the company’s fleet of towboats to 15.

- Marathon Petroleum Company has purchased the 4,000-hp *Patoka*, a retractable pilothouse towboat, from Florida Marine Transporters. This is the first retractable pilothouse towboat owned by the company.

- Eastern Shipbuilding of Allentown, Florida, has delivered the 1,500-hp *Brian Boudreaux* to Florida Marine Transporters.

- Luhr Brothers, of Columbus, Illinois, has received the 1,320-hp *T.R. Stone* from Serodino Incorporated of Chattanooga, Tennessee, for use on the UMR. Luhr Brothers has also renamed one of its towboats; the 3,000-hp *The Mule* is now *Jason Luhr*.

- Devall Towing & Boat Service has added the Southwest Shipyard-built, 1,500-hp *Ville Devall* to its fleet.

**Write Charles H. Bogart**

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New Tugboat News

Young Brothers LLC held a blessing ceremony to celebrate the arrival of the *Kapena Bob Purdy* in her new home port of Kahului, Hawaii. The tug is the fourth and final vessel in the company's newbuilding program.

The Capt. Jim McAllister arrived in her new home port of Charleston, South Carolina, on August 20. Delivered by Eastern Shipbuilding on August 16, the 7,000-hp tractor tug joins her three sisters, two operating in New York and one in Norfolk, becoming the 33rd tractor tug in the McAllister fleet. The Ava McAllister was christened on July 11 at South Street Seaport on the East River, New York City.

On July 22, Great Lakes Towing Company celebrated its 120th anniversary with the christening of its newest tug, Michigan, at Merwin's Wharf in Cleveland, Ohio. The tug is the third in a series of five 64-ft Damen-designed harbor tugs built at the company's shipyard. The Cleveland and Ohio are already in service, with the Pennsylvania expected to be delivered later this year. The fifth tug, not yet named, is slated for a spring 2020 completion. Great Lakes Towing also christened its new tug Ohio, and rechristened its old tug Ohio and dedicated it to the National Museum of the Great Lakes during a ceremony in the Port of Toledo. The older Ohio had served the company for over 60 years.

The Western Towboat Company of Seattle, Washington, launched its newest tug on May 29. The Mariner was built at the company's Ballard shipyard on Lake Washington and is the 23rd tug and 19th built by this family-owned business. The 4,000-hp tug should be completed by September.

Sause Bros. Ocean Towing Company christened its new tug, Apache, at its shipyard in Coos Bay, Oregon, on June 28. The tug is slated to work in the San Francisco area for Chevron Oil Company.

The Andrew S. is nearing completion at Main Iron Works in Houma, Louisiana. Built for Bisso Towboat Company Inc., of New Orleans, the 6,008-hp tractor tug should be in service soon.

The new Reinauer Transportation Company ATB Josephine was placed in service on July 19.

Harley Marine Services of Seattle has two tugs building at Conrad Shipyards in Morgan City, Louisiana. One will be named Shelby Withington and the other has not been named.

Harbor Docking and Towing
Company LLC of Lake Charles, Louisiana, accepted delivery of the tug Capt. Robb from Washburn & Doughty in East Boothbay, Maine. The tug is the first of two building at Washburn & Doughty for this owner.

**Other Tugboat News**

**Gateway Towing Company**, based in New Haven, Connecticut, has been bought by McAllister Towing & Transportation Company of New York. Gateway will continue to conduct all of its ocean towing, along with its barge and terminal operations, but will retire its harbor assist tugs in Connecticut and Long Island Sound.

**Latham Smith’s** Capt. Latham towed a deck barge with two container cranes aboard from Port Newark, New Jersey, to San Juan, Puerto Rico.

**The Michele Foss** towed the barge Foss Barge 3612 from Los Angeles to Everett, Washington, loaded with two container cranes for that port. The tow arrived on June 19.

**TradeWinds Towing** tug Rachel towed the former Matson Lines container ship Mauí from San Francisco to Brownsville, Texas, for scrapping, arriving on June 8.

**E.N. Bisso & Son** of New Orleans sold its tug Capt. Albert to new owners in Haiti. The tug departed the Mississippi River on June 30.

**On June 19**, Crowley Maritime’s tug Navigator was towed from Lake Charles, Louisiana, for scrapping. She was the third Invader-class tug built in 1975. The former Crowley tug Admiral arrived in Alang, India, also for scrapping. This tug was built in 1978 and was owned by eight different operators over her working life.

**Moran Towing** Corporation has sold its ocean-going tug Alice Moran to Dann Ocean Towing of Tampa, Florida, where she was renamed Margery. Moran has also transferred the Judy Moran from Norfolk to Texas to work under charter. The company’s New Orleans-based tug Baton Rouge has been stricken from its fleet list and may be scrapped soon.

**McAllister Towing** has its McAllister Girls up for sale. Laid up since 2016, the tug was built for Interstate Oil Transportation Company in 1968 and was named Challenger. After a series of owners, the tug was bought by McAllister in 2004.

**In July**, the Young Brothers tug Hokulani towed the tug Hoku-Kea from Honolulu to Seattle. Both vessels could be listed for resale or scrapped.

**Vane Brothers** of Baltimore, Maryland, has sold off two tugs and a towboat. The towboat Paradise Creek went to M3 Marine in Norfolk and was renamed Emmy Lou. M3 Marine in turn sold its former Emmy Lou to Seward Marine and she was renamed Angelina Autumn. Norfolk Tug Company bought the Sassafras and renamed her George Holland, while the Patapsco became the Steven Wayne.

**Western Towboat’s** Western Ranger towed the U.S. Navy barge TRB-36 from Guam to Pearl Harbor, arriving on July 25.

**The Christine M. McAllister** and Bruce M. McAllister towed the Ready Reserve ship USNS Antares from Baltimore to Philadelphia, where the ship was dry docked for scheduled repairs. The Reid McAllister and Beverly R. McAllister provided local assistance for the vessel entering the dry dock.
PowerShips

A SPECIAL SALUTE TO AMERICAN LINERS

The Famous Four Sisters of the Grace Line

The advent of steamships offered an opportunity to many people looking for an escape from the grind of modern life—a visit to the sun-drenched tropical waters of the Caribbean. James Zatwarnicki Jr. presents the story of the famous four sisters of the Grace Line, which set the standard for the tropical comfort and luxury we have all become accustomed to.

Manhattan’s Luxury Liner Row

Actress Tallulah Bankhead once said, “I never, ever go to the West Side—well, except to catch the boat to Europe!” William Miller reveals how Luxury Liner Row was, in many ways, a New York City landmark—most liners, especially the biggest and most famous ones, used those piers built along the Hudson.

Brusco Tug & Barge has sold its Henry Brusco to Olson Marine of Ketchikan, Alaska, where the tug was renamed Norman O.

Harley Marine Services’ tug Dr. Hank Kaplan is working in San Francisco for AmNav Maritime Corporation. It’s unknown if the tug is under charter or has been purchased.

Harbor Docking & Towing’s tug Ted is now working in Texas in Suderman & Young Towing Company colors. It’s unknown if the tug is chartered or has been sold by the Lake Charles, Louisiana, company.

Vinik Marine’s Vinik No. 6 towed the Ready Reserve freighter USNS Cape Aviatrix from a shipyard in Brooklyn, New York, to the James River Reserve Fleet in Virginia, arriving there on August 19.

On August 1, McLean Contracting Company of Glen Burnie, Maryland, completed the acquisition of Smith Brothers, a barge and tugboat rental company based in Galesville, Maryland. The company will continue to operate under the Smith Brothers name as a division of McLean. Both Smith and McLean have served the construction and maritime industries in Maryland for over 100 years. McLean will take over the entire marine fleet of Smith Brothers, which includes deck and material barges, sectional barges and three Subchapter M-compliant tugboats.

Bouchard Transportation Company had at least 13 tugboats laid up in New York and New Orleans because of numerous inspection violations during audits in the company’s office and on the affected tugs. Bouchard’s Document of Compliance was suspended by the U.S. Coast Guard until all the discrepancies were corrected and the tugs re-inspected.

A Canadian court has sentenced Houston-based Kirby Corporation to pay a $2.2-million fine after the company pleaded guilty to charges related to the grounding and oil spill from its tug Nathan E. Stewart near Bella Bella, British Columbia, on October 13, 2016. The tug was pushing a loaded petroleum barge from Ketchikan, Alaska, to Vancouver, British Columbia, but no damage occurred on the barge. The blame was placed on the second mate, who admitted falling asleep during his six-hour watch. Kirby still faces a civil suit by the Heiltsuk Nation for environmental assessment and remediation costs.

DON’T MISS THEM!

To Shining Sea: SS Manhattan & SS Washington

In this Steamboat Bill Classic Reprint, Peter C. Kohler presents a comprehensive history of two of the most popular and profitable Atlantic liners, United States Lines’ Manhattan and Washington. Exquisite photos of the ships’ interiors reveal the glory that was achieved in the midst of the Depression.

The Original “Four Aces”

In 1931, the American Export Lines began sailing the first of four new passenger/cargo ships—Excalibur, Exochorda, Exeter and Excambion—between the United States and the Mediterranean. Eric Pearson describes how the ships’ superb accommodations and excellent service attracted both passengers and profits.

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The Ghost Ships of Archangel: The Arctic Voyage That Defied the Nazis

In The Ghost Ships of Archangel, William Geroux tells the tale of four ships that broke away from the ill-fated Convoy PQ-17 in July of 1943 on a voyage from Iceland to Russia. The heavily laden convoy of 35 merchant ships and 25 British escorts left Hvalfjord on June 27, 1942. The route in Arctic waters was cold and dangerous, in 24-hour daylight, and seriously threatened by German submarines, land-based bombers and the super battleship Tirpitz. In mid-voyage the convoy was inexplicably ordered to scatter by First Sea Lord Sir Dudley Pound, and its cruiser escorts withdrew. By the time that the surviving 17 merchant ships reached Archangel, two had turned back and 22 had been sunk, and 153 lives had been lost.

Four of the ships found themselves in an ice field, away from the rest, and decided to steam to the north, farther into the ice and out of range of the bombers, to reach Archangel. They painted their ships white in order to camouflage them in the ice field, and they later became known as the “ghost ships.” They finally arrived at Archangel on July 25.

Like Geroux’s previous book, The Mathews Men, this one is meticulously researched. I found it difficult to put down. Interviews and recollections of the ships’ surviving crew members bring events to life. Geroux has brought the forgotten stories of World War II merchant seamen back to life. He has inspired me to dig deeper into my own father’s history as a wartime merchant sailor. This book has an excellent selection of photographs and maps, and is rich with data and research notes. You will enjoy and be moved by it. William A. Fox

BRITAIN’S ISLAND FORTRESSSES — Defense of the Empire 1756–1956

The years of the British Empire saw Great Britain acquiring a number of island colonies in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans, for both economic and political reasons. The political reason was to support Britain’s worldwide maritime trade. The period from 1756 to 1815, in particular, was a time of continuous war at sea, with the Royal Navy at times conducting naval operations in the three oceans. The amount of time a Royal Navy ship could stay at sea, even if powered by sail, was limited by the need to provide food and drink to the crews and carry out repairs to the ship’s hull, rigging and sails. If a ship was to stay at sea on station some distance from Great Britain, it had to have a nearby naval base where repairs to the ship could be carried out, ammunition replaced, and food, water and rum obtained. The Royal Navy’s need for overseas island bases didn’t end with the conversion of its ships from sail to steam. In fact, the Royal Navy’s need increased with the advent of steam-powered warships, since these ships needed nearby fuel depots from which to draw coal and oil to power their boilers.

In order to increase the security of these forward naval bases, the Royal Navy located them on islands. However, these island navy bases could be directly attacked by an enemy’s naval forces that were convoying troops for an amphibious assault. The loss of an island naval base and its supplies would not only hamper Royal Navy operations, it would also provide the enemy with a forward base from which to harass British merchant shipping. The recovery of a lost island naval base would require the Royal Navy to convoy a fleet of troopships to the island and then conduct an amphibious operation. To ensure that an enemy didn’t launch a coup de main against any of these naval bases, they were guarded by British Army soldiers who manned Coast Artillery batteries and garrisoned infantry strong points.

The author has selected 10 of these Royal Navy island naval bases to examine how they were defended: Bermuda, Jamaica, St. Helena, Antigua, St. Lucia, Ceylon, Mauritius, Ascension, Singapore and Hong Kong. The two naval bases in this book that fell to enemy forces, Singapore and Hong Kong, were captured by landward attacks and not attacks from the sea.

The book is divided into 10 chapters. The first chapter provides an excellent summary of the policies that led to the development of overseas naval bases and the engineering and gunnery theories that shaped their fortifications. Each of the remaining chapters examines one of the island bases, with the exception of Antigua and St. Lucia, which are covered in one chapter. Each chapter follows the same format: an introduction to how the island was acquired, a chronological development of its fortifications and a look at what remains today. Each chapter is supported by a map that identifies all the fortifications discussed. There are also contemporary and current photos of individual fortifications and their guns. The book closes with an appendix that lists the characteristics of the guns encountered in the book. The bibliography
cites numerous books on coast artillery and coast defense that will allow the reader to further study each island’s fortifications.

In summary, ships are only mentioned as an incidental to the main subject of the book, brick and concrete fortifications and the guns emplaced in them. However, if the topic of fortifications, particularly coast defense fortifications, is of interest to you, this is a must-read book. Charles H. Bogart

THE AGE OF INVINCIBLE: The Ship that Defined the Modern Royal Navy

This book is both a history of HMS Invincible, from her conception, design, building, operational life and scrapping, and the story of the political process that conceived her and then vacillated about her relevance to the British defense posture. Invincible and her two sisters, Ark Royal and Illustrious, were poster children for the conflict between the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy concerning operational control of the United Kingdom’s war planes.

If there was one consistency in British defense policy concerning the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm during the last half of the 20th century, it was inconsistency. The Royal Navy, which had developed the concept of the aircraft carrier during World War I, had never been able to institutionalize its importance as part of the overall defense policy of Great Britain. Far too many members of Parliament saw the aircraft carrier as expensive, vulnerable to attack and irrelevant to the realities of the Cold War. A war, if it turned hot, would be fought by the British Army and land-based RAF planes dropping nuclear bombs, not by aircraft flying from Royal Navy carriers.

The crescendo in the book is Invincible’s operations during the Falklands War. All of the RAF’s claims that it could operate its aircraft world-wide fell to earth like Icarus when they tried to challenge Argentina’s occupation of the Falklands. Just as the Arnhem Bridge was a bridge too far, so the Falklands were islands too far for the RAF but not for the Royal Navy.

While the Falklands War showed that the concept of sea-basing the Harrier jets on Invincible and her sisters was a war-winning concept, it also showed a deep fallacy in this concept. Enough Harriers had to be produced and maintained to ensure that during the 30-year life of the carriers there would be enough aircraft to be based on them. The Falklands War and its aftermath would show that not enough resources had been spent to ensure that there were enough Sea Harriers available when needed.

With the carriers having proven their worth during the Falklands War, the Royal Navy was permitted to retain Invincible and her two sister ships. The next two decades would see the ships rushing to and fro from one hot spot to another in the Eastern Mediterranean, along the shores of Africa and in the waters of the Arabian Sea. Instead of being relegated to the role of anti-submarine carriers in the last years of their lives, the ships found themselves being employed as attack carriers. Circa 2010, when Invincible and her sisters were scrapped, the Royal Navy, for the first time in 90 years, didn’t have a carrier in its fleet.

The author of this book has written an exceptional story that integrates all the various internal and external institutional forces that shape the life of a ship. If the Royal Navy or the topic of Navy policy are of interest to you, read this book. Charles H. Bogart

ALL AMERICAN TROOPSHIPS

Capt. Walter W. Jaffee was superintendent of the Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet and first officer of the SS Jeremiah O’Brien on her historic return to Normandy in 1994. He has written sixteen books about the Merchant Marine, the Navy and training ships. Notable among these are his encyclopedic works on Liberty and Victory ships, tankers, freighters, troopships and passenger liners, and tugboats. All American Troopships is the latest in this series. It opens with a chapter on the general history of troopships from ancient times to the 19th century. This is followed by ten more chapters on major conflicts and their troopships up to the Vietnam War. Eighty-two ships are covered in Chapter 3, Troop Transports of the Spanish American War. Every entry in the book presents a table of particulars and dates and a career summary, and hundreds of photographs of the ships are included, many in color.

The front paper of this oversized book is a highly detailed inboard profile and C Deck plan of the reconditioned SS Leviathan (ex-SS Vaterland). In 1922 she was reconditioned at Newport News and became locally known as “the ship that saved the Shipyard.” This caught my attention immediately, and as I read on, more and more familiar ships, and new stories, appeared. For example, I didn’t know that the troopship USAT Cristobal had been reconditioned for war-bride service at Newport News in 1946. My father served on her afterwards, and he always said that he wasn’t allowed in the passenger areas since he wasn’t an officer.

All American Troopships is comprehensive, covering the late 19th and whole 20th centuries. It includes entries for many ships that I didn’t realize had served as troopships during their careers. Appendixes include a list of military units carried on troopships, the SS President Washington, the largest troopship ever planned (but not built), and a bibliography, ship-name index and general index. All American Troopships is a great addition to my library and an excellent book for browsing. I’m sure that you will appreciate and enjoy it. William A. Fox

Write William A. Fox at 112 Colonel’s Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185 or wafox8@msn.com
Looking back on the original Prospectus for the *Steamboat Bill of Facts* to see how we’ve grown and evolved in celebration of our 85th Anniversary year.
Half-Hull High Tech

Quaint-looking in today’s eyes, in 1862 this half-hull model of the India was considered state-of-the-art. A century before computer-aided-design appeared, shipbuilders honed hulls in miniature before scaling them up for construction. This half-hull and the subsequent vessel were constructed at the famed Wm. Denny & Brothers shipyard in Scotland. Denny’s was well-known for innovation, and in later years the company opened the first model ship testing basin, built the first all-steel merchant vessel and introduced the first turbine steamer.

The Model is part of the Posner Maritime Art Collection, stewarded by SSHSA. The detailing is exquisite — natural and ebonized woods against a framed mahogany backing, beautifully crafted miniature fittings in brass and wood mounted on deck, and an attached brass plaque providing ship details.

According to the Smithsonian Institution, “Half hull models were the first step in the construction of a ship. They were carved out of horizontal strips of wood known as lifts, and only one side was needed since ships are symmetrical. After a model was approved, its lines were taken (measured) and it was disassembled. Then the lines were lofted, or drawn at full scale on the floor. The actual ship’s frames were cut to fit the lines on the floor and then set in place along the keel during the construction process. Sometimes the models were discarded or even burned as firewood after use, but many original examples are preserved today.”

The ship was built for British-India Steam Navigation Company. A few details are worth noting. First, the India is single-screw versus paddlewheel propulsion as was common in the day. British-India traded in primitive ports along the Indian coast without piers, so ships needed to be beached to unload cargo. A stern-mounted propeller was easier to keep clear than a side-mounted paddlewheel. Also, India’s large holds were designed to haul not only freight and animals, but troops. Early on B-I realized the profit in operating troopships, a focus that continued all the way until the company’s demise in the 1980s.

And what of the India? She sailed for the line until 1880, when she was sold to Italian ship owners. It wasn’t until 1896 that she was broken up.

To get a better view of the India half-hull, check out SSHSA’s own high-tech wonder, our “virtual museum,” online at www.sshsa.org. There you can see close-up views of this model and other objects, paintings and models from the Posner Collection.

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