

Ocean Times

Chapter Notes

Southern California Chapter of the Steamship Historical Society of America **Bruce Vancil, President**

Greetings. I hope you are having a delightful spring. This quarter has presented the Chapter with its share of fun items. First, I am pleased to announce that the Board of Directors has created an honorary position on the board where senior members are elected as advisory board members for life. This is done to recognize outstanding service to the organization over time and to allow them to continue to have input into the organization's work and plans. It is given without voting rights or the requirement to attend meetings. Advisory Board members may continue to use the SSHSA title in their resume, publication/lecture credentials, etc. We have been fortunate over the years to have some very talented people step up to serve. Our first group of Advisory Board members are Daniel Crosswell, Shawn Dake and Peter Knego. Thanks, guys, for all that you have done and continue to provide.

The rest of the Board of Directors for 2010 are as follows.

President -Bruce Vancil

Vice President – Bruce Lyons

Treasurer – William Keene

Secretary - Donna Weiger

And members at large:

Tom Nicolai

Everett Hoard

Mike Shockley – Fund Raising Chair

Bob Aul

Aimee Aul

Many thanks to the dedicated members of our board for their guidance and efforts in planning and implementing our annual program.

There has also been another exciting donation that we will be passing along to the Queen Mary for the Artifact

NEXT MEETING: Saturday, May 1, 2010
1:00 - 3:00pm aboard the RMS QUEEN MARY
A History of Princess Cruises
By Shawn Dake

Caronia Room (former 3rd class cinema) "B" Dk Fwd.
==== RSVP to (949)454-8849 =====

Recovery effort. Merle Thomsen, long time SSHSA member and known collector of china, silver, etc. has donated 400 pieces of original Queen Mary 1st class china. The initial gift, consisting of 200 small plates and 200 soup bowls, was delivered to the Queen Mary and accepted by crew for inclusion in the ship's official city inventory. Several of our board members and supporters were on hand to witness and photograph the delivery. There it will remain with the ship as a part of the ship's archive collection. Items secured in this way will remain aboard the ship regardless of any management changes that may take place over the years. SSHSA is pleased to be able to help the Queen Mary recover some of the many historic items that left the ship by means of auction or otherwise, over the years. Merle has another similar donation planned for the coming year. We'll keep you posted.

CUNARD CELEBRATIONS: DOWN UNDER

by Bill Miller

There are no more famous ocean liners, we think than the Cunard Queens. There have been six to date and a seventh on the way (the 92,000-ton Queen Elizabeth, due out in October). Just about everyone remembers the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, that original, 1930s pair that sailed the North Atlantic for years and in glorious tandem. They

were the most popular and successful pair of Atlantic super liners ever. The Mary was actually the more beloved and not only by passengers, but by staff as well. It was said that she not only had a certain grandeur, a mystique, but something given to but a few ships --- she had a "soul". And this transcended to those onboard. The Queen Elizabeth 2, the now much-beloved QE2, followed in 1969 as something of a royal successor, but actually quite a breakaway in many ways, including design and decoration. Given almost icon status these days, she is thought to be a grand example of what is now called "mid century" style. And having now sailed for 38 years, she has broken every superliner record --- more miles sailed, more passengers carried, just about more everything. And then, in 2003, came the Queen Mary 2, the largest, tallest most costly build liner to date. She had, it seems, almost instant celebrity.

The Queens always seem to be making news. But in February 2007, on a rather magical Australian summer's evening in Sydney, Cunard could not have even wished for a more successful occasion. The two Queens --- the QE2 and the QM2 --- met while traveling westward on their respective world cruises. We had arrived that morning to a joyous, spirited reception aboard the 1,132-foot long Mary 2. While a Tuesday and so a normal work day, the crowds along the shores were huge. Hundreds of boats serenaded the liner from daybreak onwards, just after we passed through the famed Sydney Heads. Helicopters and small planes buzzed overhead, fireboats

spayed and all while whistles, horns and sirens created a seemingly endless concert. Onboard, the outer, upper decks were crowded with passengers and crew alike. Slowly, the 151,000-ton Queen made her way into the harbor, passed that grand Opera House and then, with easy precision, turned just before the Harbor Bridge, reversed course and then slowly docked in a specially prepared berth at the naval dock yard on Garden Island. She was simply too big, too long, to use the normal passenger berth at Circular Quay, located just across from the Opera House. Once ashore, the 2,500 or so passengers (including 800 Australians) were bussed across downtown Sydney to a cruise terminal in Darling Harbor for final disembarkation.

We had joined the \$800 million, 17-deck high Queen Mary 2 two weeks earlier, in another favorite port-city: San Francisco. From a shoreline jetty, we watched as she made her mid-afternoon arrival, a sort of royal procession, and in glorious, golden California sunshine. Again hundreds of small boats, chartered craft, ferries and more of those spouting fireboats, created the royal court. Included was the flag-bedecked, splendidly preserved World War II Liberty ship Jeremiah O'Brien. She was almost top-heavy with 900 onboard, many of them loyalist subscribers to saving that 63-year-old vessel. Tens of thousands, so television new casters reported, lined the waterfront near Pier 29 and then well into the night just to see the largest Atlantic ocean liner ever built. Her funnel and uppermost lights were switched off, however, to comply with a City rule that no tall, lighted structure can compete with the nocturnal skyline. The next day, at a gala luncheon, the QM2 was officially welcomed by the mayor and other officials. That night, we sailed --- with appropriate touches of the famed San Francisco fog and the tooting of a few deep-voiced horns --- and headed-off on a 15-night trip to Honolulu, Pago Pago, Auckland and finally Sydney. "It is a dream come true to sail on the Queen Mary 2 and on her maiden world cruise and on her maiden calls to Pago Pago, Auckland and Sydney," said a British couple from Bath. "My father had been a soldier during the Second World War and went overseas

on the original Queen Mary and my mother went to America for a visit in the 1950s on the Queen Elizabeth, and so this is a wonderful connection to them."

Auckland laid on a very spirited early morning reception for the 28-knot QM2 and later city streets were clogged, often brought to a standstill, as Saturday afternoon crowds flocked to the waterfront to see the mighty Cunarder. The 10-hour visit ended with a one-hour fireworks extravaganza and more of those small boats and tooting tugboats as we sailed for Australia and an even grander reception. Australia did, indeed, lay out the thickest, grandest red carpet.

Sydney newspapers and TV news were ablaze with the QM2's arrival. She was not just headlines, but big headlines. Some Australians remembered, of course, that wartime meeting of the original Mary and Elizabeth, then both in troopship gray, off those Sydney Heads back in January 1941. Afterward, for a year so, the converted Queens carried Aussie soldiers off to war, mostly across the Indian Ocean to Suez for the Allied reinforcement of North Africa and the Middle East.

Throughout the day, there were luncheons, tours, special tea parties and a long string of televised tours and interviews with top staff members onboard the QM2. But an even bigger, greater occasion was just hours away. At seven that night, as Sydney skies were slowly, evocatively turning from golden hues to cinnamon and finally to charcoal, we boarded a friend's large cabin cruiser and joined an estimated 500 other craft in the outer harbor. With the towering QM2 still berthed at the naval dock yard (and sailing that night close to midnight for Hong Kong), the majestic QE2 arrived, flag-bedecked and sounding her throaty, big liner whistles. Again, small craft formed the royal procession. Horns and sirens again sounded continuously and those fireboats sent up their great watery fans. Off the naval pier, the 70,000-ton Elizabeth seemed to pause, as if to pay homage, a sort of royal curtesy, queen mother to queen so to speak, to her larger successor.

With their whistles, they exchanged greetings. They had, in fact, been together a month before, in mid January, as they sailed together from Fort Lauderdale. Then, lowly, graciously, now beginning to light from end to end, the Elizabeth made her way toward the Harbor Bridge, passing the floodlit Opera House and then, with tugboat assistance, was swung round, the front of her 963-foot long hull pointed outward, and berthed at Circular Quay, the main passenger terminal. It was all perfectly timed, choreographed as if a part of the royal ballet, and then finished off with a blazing fireworks show (some said "the greatest ever in Sydney harbor"). Two million were reportedly along the shores or on boats and there were subsequent traffic jams, going well into the wee hours, that took hours to sort. But in all, it was a grand occasion, a thoroughly memorable travel experience and a gala meeting of the world's two most famous liners. Cunard must have been thrilled.

M.V. COHO 50 YEARS OF RELIABLE SERVICE UNDER THE BLACK BALL FLAG

By Shawn J. Dake

For an ocean-going vessel to reach the age of 50 is quite an accomplishment. To span a career of over five decades under the same name, ownership and on the original service for which it was designed is almost unheard of. Yet that is exactly what the m.v. COHO has managed to do. It is a ship perfectly suited to the daily ferry service it provides between Port Angeles, Washington and Victoria, British Columbia. In over 50 years, it has never missed a sailing and is as reliable today as it was at the time of it's maiden voyage in 1959.



m.v. COHO under construction in 1959. Photo Courtesy Black Ball

The Black Ball Ferry Line of today takes its name and heritage from a long line of predecessors flying the red flag with the black ball in the center. Familial ties date back as far as the original Black Ball Line of clipper ships that crossed the Atlantic from 1816 until 1878. More recent company connections can be made to the Alaska Steamship Company, founded in 1894 by Charles Peabody and his partners, and the Puget Sound Navigation Company (PSN), established in 1898. In 1902, the PSN pioneered a steamship route between Port Townsend and Port Angeles on the Washington side and Victoria, British Columbia on the southern tip of Vancouver Island in Canada. Peabody's fleet merged with the interesting vessels of Captain Joshua Green in 1903 turning the PSN into a force to be reckoned with. Four years later Green purchased two Great Lakes vessels, the twin-funnelled, steel-hulled steamers CHIPPEWA and IROQUOIS, greatly upgrading the quality of service to become competitive with the Canadian Pacific Railway's fleet of "Princess" ships. By the late 1920's both were converted to carry automobiles in addition to passengers. Joshua Green resigned from the PSN in 1927 to pursue banking following the death of Charles Peabody in 1926. In 1928, Alexander Marshall Peabody, Charles' son, became the company's president and revived The Black Ball Line trade name. Over the years the Black Ball Line ran passenger ferries such as the famous CHINOOK and the art deco masterpiece KALAKALA (fashioned from a former California ferryboat named PERALTA). The old ferries of the Black Ball Line went on to form the basis of the Washington State Ferry System in 1951, while the six ships that were retained by the company, transferred to the Canadian flag and a decade later were purchased by the new British Columbia Ferry Authority in 1961. In addition to pioneering passenger and vehicle ferries, one of the PSN subsidiary companies was the Black Ball Freight Service. Mr. Robert J. (Bob) Acheson became their traffic manager in 1932. By 1936, he was able to purchase the freight service and the rights to the ports. In 1952, Mr. Acheson and his wife Lois renamed their company Black Ball Transport, Inc. The house flag added a thin white



Builder's Plate of the COHO.
Photograph by Shawn J. Dake

circle around the black ball. The independent Black Ball Transport, Inc. ran freight service with the 1901-built IROQUOIS, which it acquired in 1947. The former passenger steamer, converted to a night boat was completely rebuilt again as a motor freighter in the early 1950's, unrecognizable from her former self.

The IROQUOIS' route traveled year-round between Seattle, Port Townsend, Port Angeles and Victoria until 1959, then summers only when the new COHO joined the fleet. Although getting ahead of the story, the Black Ball Freight Service was sold in 1973 to ROCOR International, with the IROQUOIS going to Alaska-Shell, ultimately becoming a crab processor until intentionally sunk in 1982. The COHO thankfully was retained by Black Ball Transport and continues operating to the present day.

In addition to beautiful scenery, the waters of Puget Sound are famous for a magnificent silver salmon. In 1959, Black Ball Transport, Inc. began building an auto and passenger ferry named after this prized fish, the COHO. It was R.J. Acheson's dream to build a ship for passenger and vehicle travel, as well as for freight service. Philip F. Spaulding & Associates of Seattle designed the ship. The keel of hull number 105, was laid on January 12, 1959 at the Puget Sound Bridge & Dredging Company in Seattle. (The yard was purchased that year by Lockheed and the Dredging portion of the name was amended to Dry Dock.) The exterior was sleek and pleasing to the eye, looking much more like a miniature passenger liner than a typical ferry. A raked tripod mast just forward of the single squat funnel enhanced her low profile. The interior spaces were in line

With other American ship designs of the day, attractive and functional, rather than lavish or elegant. Plenty of glass windows for viewing the passing scenery offset the austerity of metal bulkheads and stainless steel rails. The furnishings were a then modern, now classic, mid-20th Century-style giving the ship a comfortable, contemporary feel. By the end of the year, the new ship had undergone her sea trials and was ready to enter regular service. Built at a cost of \$3 million, the m.v. COHO was the most expensive, privately-funded ferry ever built in North America up to that time. The flag of the United States flies over the stern and the ship is registered in Seattle.

The maiden commercial voyage sailed from Port Angeles, Washington to Victoria, B.C. on December 29, 1959. The m.v. COHO maintained this run with roundtrip voyages at least twice each day and up to four times daily in the summer. In addition, to her day job as a passenger and vehicle ferry, the COHO served as a night freighter carrying trucks between Seattle, Port Angeles, Port Townsend and Victoria for the Black Ball Freight Service, until 1973.

The COHO was the built at the right time and was a perfect size for the route. Travel by private car was increasing as the highway systems gradually improved. At 5,315 gross tons and with the ability to handle up to 125 cars and initially 750 passengers, the ship was ideal, especially in comparison to the older tonnage that serviced Victoria. The COHO is 341.6 feet long, with a width of 72.2 feet. The original propulsion plant consisted of two Cooper-Bessemer diesel engines with a total output of 4,160 BHP, driving the eight foot diameter twin screws, for a cruising speed of 15 knots. The original design was so good in fact that when the British Columbia Ferry Authority decided to build their first two new ships in 1960, the SIDNEY and the TSAWWASSEN, utilized Philip Spaulding's plans for the COHO with modifications for the Canadian

service. The prefix "QUEEN OF..." was later added to the B.C. Ferries and subsequent ships maintained similar design traits, as did the three Alaska Marine Highway vessels built in 1963.

The COHO had competition on the Victoria to Port Angeles route in the form of Canadian Pacific Railway's classic two-funneled ferry PRINCESS MARGUERITE. From a design standpoint the two ships could not have been more different. The Canadian vessel entered service in 1949, but was largely based on pre-War designs. Although just 10 years older than the COHO, she looked like a relic from another era next to the modern new American vessel. From the outset the COHO had the advantage of being able to load vehicles through a stern door at Port Angeles and disembark them through a side door at Victoria. For the return trip the entry and exit from the vessel was simply reversed making for faster loading. PRINCESS MARGUERITE only had a side door and originally a much lower car-carrying capacity. On the COHO there are up to 14 feet of vertical clearance, compared to only 6 feet, 10 inches on the PRINCESS MARGUERITE. The older ship made one afternoon roundtrip from Victoria to Port Angeles, in between roundtrip voyages to Seattle, while the COHO made up to four roundtrips daily during the summer season. Although a wonderful and beautiful ship, the PRINCESS MARGUERITE was competitively outclassed. Canadian Pacific kept trying until September, 1974 but finally gave up on the route and their classic ship.

Over the years the basic layout of the COHO has not been altered much. Additional seating has increased the capacity to 1,000 passengers. A partially covered solarium was added to the aft Sun Deck in 1974. The lifeboats were raised a deck higher, with new decking covering the open air promenades. A second, smaller tripod mast placed above the bridge was added in 1988. Below decks a sewage treatment plant was another addition. The current vehicle capacity is 101 cars. Forward on the top deck is the wheelhouse, with the Captain's cabin situated just aft on the starboard side and the Chief Engineer's stateroom to

port. Crew quarters make up the rest of the interior space in this section, with a small crew lounge, galley and mess located aft of the funnel. The farthest aft section is the passenger solarium and outdoor seating. Interior and exterior staircases connect it to the Promenade Deck below. Passengers are able to walk entirely around this deck and are even permitted on the ship's bow once the vessel has cleared port. Forward is a very comfortable observation lounge with windows on three sides. The ship's builder's plate along with other awards and memorabilia, are displayed on the aft bulkhead. Through the doors on the starboard side is the Purser's Office. The lobby also contains the forward stairs down to the car deck. Continuing aft there are Gents and Ladies restrooms on either side as the hallways lead into the large passenger lounge. Bench style padded seats are along the sides with orange and green, mid-century-style chairs throughout the middle. A new duty free shopping counter was recently added to the aft section. Beyond the aft stairs is the coffee shop. Part of the original cafeteria has become the stainless steel-walled gift shop with souvenirs of the ship and the Pacific Northwest. Passengers can eat their meals and snacks at tables with attached seats along both sides and in the aft section. Weather permitting, a fine view of the Olympic Mountains can be had from the ship's stern while crossing the Strait of Juan de Fuca on the trip to Victoria.

Speaking of weather the COHO has to sail in all kinds of conditions from beautiful sunny days to fog, snow, rain and high winds and seas. As an example, one such day was May 5, 1990. The latest ship of the B.C. Stena Line, the 1966-built CROWN PRINCESS VICTORIA was on her inaugural trip from Seattle to Victoria. It was a particularly rough day in the Strait Of Juan de Fuca with the ship battling 50 knot winds, and taking water over the bow. Arriving at the outer harbor of Victoria, it soon became obvious that the CROWN PRINCESS VICTORIA would not be able to berth as the winds repeatedly drove the ship against the cement pier. The COHO meanwhile, seemingly unfazed by the elements, sailed right past into her berth in the inner harbor. The COHO then made her normal return trip to Port Angeles, with

the B.C. Stena Line ship wallowing around for 17 hours before finally returning safely to Seattle. When the seas run high and the winds blow through the Strait, the COHO has to tack to keep the waves on the bow, before changing course to present the stern to a following sea. This is done for the comfort of the passengers and keeps the motion down by not taking the seas directly on the ship's beam. As most days are fairly calm, the 90-minute run straight across to Victoria can be handled in the normal manner.

During the years that the COHO was used as both a daytime ferry and a night freighter, it was said that the ship was in perpetual motion. On a typical 24 hour day in the 1960's, the longest period she would be in one place was two hours. After the daytime passenger runs, the ship was loaded with truck trailers filled with cargo bound for Port Townsend and Seattle, arriving there by 9:30pm. Sailing again just before midnight, the process would be reversed with up to 76, 24-foot truck trailers coming aboard, then dropping off freight before a 5:00am arrival back at Port Angeles. By 7:00am the ship was a passenger and auto ferry again bound for Victoria. The freight operation was an early example of a successful Roll On/Roll Off (RORO) service, just becoming popular in the late 1950's. Even today, the ship stops only for a brief overnight rest in Port Angeles before beginning another day of crossings.

By the beginning of the new millennium, the engines of the COHO were aging and a decision had to be made concerning the ship's future. There was talk about a replacement, or possibly adding another vessel. Fate intervened, as the events of September 11, 2001 triggered a sharp decline in the tourism industry, putting any potential plans on hold. Instead, early in 2004, it was decided to replace her twin Cooper-Bessemer diesel engines with new General Motors EMD 12-645 7FB, turbocharged engines, each producing 2,550 BHP at 900 RPM connecting to Falk 3485 MRV

reduction gears. The old 1958 vintage engines had been rated for 2,080 BHP each at 300 RPM. The Elliott Bay Design Group (EBDG) designed and engineered the power transplant. The choice of EBDG was highly appropriate as the company over time had evolved from Philip F. Spaulding and Associates, the original designer of the COHO. The operation took place over a nine-week period at the Todd Pacific Shipyard. On the sea trials, all went well and a more powerful COHO returned to regular service on March 12, 2004.

The Black Ball Transport Company remained a family enterprise over the years. When Robert (R.J.) Acheson passed away in 1963, his wife Lois Bates Acheson took over the company. She had been Vice-President of the freight service since 1948. At it's peak the company owned 350 trucks in addition to the ferry service. On August 29, 2004, at the age of 89 Lois Acheson died. She bequeathed \$21 million and the ferry operation to the Oregon State University Foundation in Corvallis to establish a College Of Veterinary Medicine, under the Black Ball Transport Trust. In 2008, the company was renamed the Black Ball Ferry Line, remaining under American ownership, continuing the philanthropy of its founders. The company is headquartered in Victoria, B.C., employing up to 90 people during the peak season. Each year the COHO transports about 405,000 passengers, accounting for 60% of the total ferry visitors to Victoria's Inner Harbor.

For 2009, the COHO was out of service for annual dry dock maintenance from January 26th until February 8th. The rest of the year the ship was back on schedule, usually with two to four roundtrip sailings each day. For the 50th anniversary, the company chose to celebrate all year long with promotions and events leading up to the actual anniversary date. On June 17th, at the start of the peak summer season, a symbolic celebration was held on the ship's arrival at Victoria. A fireboat, tugs and a flotilla of small craft escorted the COHO to her berth at the Belleville Street terminal where business and tourism leaders were waiting with a large birthday cake. A similar



m.v. COHO crossing the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Photograph by Shawn J. Dake

commemoration happened at Port Angeles with a presentation at the local Chamber Of Commerce, along with a well attended company reunion of past employees and their families. The actual golden anniversary date of December 29, 2009, was a lower key affair, although there were onboard festivities for passengers in recognition of this milestone event. A special birthday cake served by proud crew members to passengers helped mark the occasion. For the current season, fares for foot passengers are a modest \$14.50 each way. Combined vehicle and driver fees are \$53.00. Guests driving north on Highway 101 to Port Angeles, may leave their vehicles across from the ferry terminal in the public parking garage for \$11.00 per day. Black Ball Ferry maintains an excellent website at www.cohoferry.com. Additional photos of the ship by this author can be seen there as well as at www.maritimematters.com/coho. A variety of travel packages and hotels in Victoria are offered in addition to the ferry reservations. The U.S. terminal is located at 101 E. Railroad Avenue in Port Angeles, Washington.

What does the future hold for the COHO? Engaged in international trade the ship must meet Safety Of Life At Seas (SOLAS) 2010 requirements. Several of the SOLAS provisions are "grandfathered" for the COHO and upgrades have been completed to meet all of the new requirements. Built according to the standards of American shipbuilding at the time, the vessel contains little or no wood. Other than the engines, relatively few alterations have been necessary over the years, which again is a tribute to her designer and builders. According to Ryan Burles, the President and Chief Executive Officer, "Given her maintenance regime

and the new engines, she is good for at east 20 years. It is not our intention to change the way we have maintained her." The company plans to continue business as usual for the foreseeable future. In their own words; "Today, the Black Ball Ferry Line continues its tradition and is proud to be a reliable leader in our tourism and transportation industry. In our 50 years of service, we have transported over 21 million passengers and 6 million vehicles. We plan to continue the tradition and deliver prompt, reliable service to our passengers." Mr. Burles deferred when asked about sharing anecdotes from his 25 years with Black Ball. Instead he offered this summation, providing a glimpse of why the operation has been so successful. "Our company has always been like a family. The Captains, Officers and Managers have been mentors to the students and staff. Mr. Acheson had the crew quarters built up top on the COHO which at the time was unheard of (at that time {the norm was} down below beside the engine room). Mr. Acheson and Mrs. Acheson always cared about their staff and were able to keep it an environment where hard work and a reliable service coincided with a human touch." It is a long and proud legacy, stretching over five decades, as the sleek red, white and gray ferry, m.v. COHO, with the Black Ball flag flying from her mast continues to cross the 22 mile Strait of Juan de Fuca, carrying passengers and their vehicles, safely between Port Angeles and Victoria.

Vessel Information

M.V. COHO

Builder: Puget Sound Bridge & Dry Dock Company, Seattle, Washington

Year Built: 1959

Flag: UNITED STATES

Vessel Particulars

Type: Passenger/Auto ferry

Length : 341.6 ft overall

Breadth: 72.2 ft

Draft: 15.5 ft

Net Tonnage(NRT): 3897

Gross Tonnage: 5,315 as built

Passengers: 750 - 1,000

Vehicle Capacity: 125 as built, 101 as currently configured.

Loading: Stern door and Starboard side door forward.

Machinery: Twin Screw powered by twin diesel engines, with twin rudders.

Originally two Cooper-Bessemer Diesels with total output of 4,160 BHP

Replaced in 2004 with two General Motors Electro-Motive Division, 12 cylinder diesel Main Propulsion Engines with total rating of 5,100 BHP
Cruising speed: 15 knots.

Call-Sign: WM4599

IMO Number : 507694900

Thanks to Vanessa Bachand, Ryan Burles, Bill Eisenhauer and all the staff at Black Ball Ferry Line. Thanks also to Martin Cox and Maritime Matters.com.

Special Dedication to my Dad and Mom, Delbert and Gloria Dake, for taking me on my first "boat ride" in the 1960's aboard the COHO.

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Book Review Designs 09

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Email: info@shippax.se or www.shippax.se

Reviewed by Shawn J. Dake

The annual DESIGNS series of books is the single most comprehensive guide to all new passenger vessels in the world from ferries to giant cruise liners. If the ship is a prototype design, you will find it here. There is always a featured piece on the first new ship of a class. For example the current issue, Designs 09 features the CELEBRITY SOLSTICE in great detail, and while mention might be made of subsequent ships of this type, they will not have separate stories in the future, as the reader can reference the original vessel in the "Solstice Class" rather than seeing five stories on all the sister vessels. The entire first half of the book is devoted to articles and color photographs on Celebrity Cruises; their

history, interior design, special innovations on their newest class of ships and the Meyer Werft shipyard that is building them.

Designs is published each September, showcasing vessels from the previous 12 months. The next issue Designs 10 will have extensive coverage of the OASIS OF THE SEAS. Any passenger ships that have undergone extensive conversions or lengthening are also included. Accompanying each vessel is a page devoted to every technical detail that can be thought of from tonnage and ship dimensions to minutia regarding passenger cabins. From the top of the mast to the smallest details about the propellers, it is included. For the historian and the passenger ship enthusiast alike, this is information that can not be found anywhere else. Every ship covered has detailed general arrangement plans and profiles, again taking the observer from the base of the funnel down to the tank tops. If there is any complaint to be raised, it is only because the ships are so large, the plans of necessity have to be fairly small to fit the page, which requires a magnifying glass to view the details.

Designs 09 has features on the conversions of Fred. Olsen Lines BRAEMAR and GAP Adventures EXPEDIATION, the replacement for the ill-fated EXPLORER. New cruise liners featured include, CELEBRITY SOLSTICE, COSTA LUMINOSA, MSC FANTASIA and SEABOURN ODYSSEY. Using their stated criteria, they eliminate information on a vessel such as COSTA PACIFICA, which they wisely recognize as a member of the CARNIVAL CONQUEST class, and therefore not a prototype ship. A reference is provided to the 2003 guide in this instance, to find the original information. For ferry enthusiasts the same meticulous attention to detail is provided for those vessels, as it is for the cruise liners. From obscure shipyards and vessels in China to the better known European ferry companies everything you could ever want to know is within these pages. For myself, information on the new British Columbia ferries such as the Canadian-built ISLAND SKY and the 600-passenger newbuild NORTHERN EXPEDITION from Germany, proved particularly helpful in doing research on

these replacements for the veteran members of the B.C. Ferry fleet.

Designs 09 is 241 pages in length, with every page crammed full of photographs, information or deck plans. Included are pages of advertisements from the shipyards and suppliers of materials to these ships, which are interesting in themselves. This annual guide is the closest thing available in the present day to the old Shipbuilder And Marine Engineer publications that were treasured in the past as reference guides to the greatest ocean liners ever constructed. Designs 09 is a bit on the pricy side at \$98.00 US. Still, for the amount of material contained, it is well worth it for the detailed maritime researcher, or the casual observer that wishes to keep tabs on all that is current in the passenger shipping industry. For the most dedicated of ship enthusiasts, I can highly recommend Designs 09 and the other books, past and future in this series.

Correction – Photo Credits Owed to Contributors

The photo caption omission happened in the fall O.T. issue; the one before the January issue. The pictures were of the P2 transports POPE and PATRICK which were laid up in Susuin Bay. The photos should be credited to Frank Cleope Jr. By the way, he is the go to guy for any photos or information on the PRESIDENT CLEVELAND and WILSON. His Dad was the executive chef for APL and is pictured in some of their 1960's brochures. Frank is a wonderful, interesting guy, and one of the fun people I have met through this hobby we all share.

Member Photo Contribution



Hawaii Cruise Sunset
from Donna Weiger