



With Sand Island in the background the Hawaiian Rancher is about to pass the Aloha Tower in Honolulu in a picture taken during May of 1968. Note the hatch tents in position over holds 1, 2 and 5. This ship was scrapped in 1972.

Matson's Post World War II Freighters Part 1: The C3s

story & images* by David Hendrickson

The Matson Navigation Company marked its 140th anniversary in April 2022. To some, the Matson name conjures up memories of white passenger ships, swank hotels in Hawaii, or possibly a short-lived airline; but cargo has been Matson's bread and butter since its inception, and the company has operated a diverse fleet of freight ships during its existence.

What follows is a brief look back at the lives and times of Matson's C3 and C4 cargo ships of the post World War II years. Forgotten now, they were among the most significant vessels Matson has operated. One of them, the *Hawaiian Citizen*, is arguably the most important Matson ship ever.

In July 1945, with the end of World War II in sight, Matson announced it intended to institute weekly freighter sailings to Honolulu once hostilities ceased and that, further, it was planning to invest \$20 million in new cargo ship tonnage. Short term plans included operating four

*unless otherwise noted

continued on page 4

also in this issue ...

Cinderella Victories

Tramping Cyberspace

Lurline at 90

Cruising during COVID

... and more!

MEETING NOTICE

The February 4, 2023
Chapter Meeting
will be a ZOOM event.

Kate Vescera will discuss
the RMS *Queen Elizabeth*.

An invitation containing the
ZOOM meeting link will be
sent out in advance.

Your SoCal Chapter Board for 2023

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OCEAN TIMES

Wayne Yanda - Editor
editor.oceantimes@gmail.com

Bruce Vancil - Editor Emeritus
Bill Keene - Editor Emeritus

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The *Ocean Times* is the Journal of the Southern
California Chapter of the Steamship Historical Society
of America for the Chapter's membership and friends.

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Chapter Notes

Bruce Vancil, President

Notes for November – what a busy time it has been – some events with consequential influences, I am coming to the end of my term as President and will not be seeking office again. This would frighten me a lot if we had not had the great luck in finding Kate Vescera and having her join the board earlier in the year. She did express interest in leadership roles and has now been selected as the next Chapter President effective January 1, 2023. I am quite impressed in her abilities and qualifications including being a partner in a law firm in Long Beach. I feel very good about passing the torch to such a talented and qualified next generation leader and putting myself out to pasture. After about 26 years I feel that new, younger blood will take us further into the 21st century than I could have.

Our *Ocean Times* will now be overseen by Wayne Yanda as the Chief Editor. He has been teaming with Bill Keene the past few editions and shown some impressive skills. Expect *OT* to get even better, if that is even possible. Wayne also possesses a delightful, professional sounding speaking voice that I never get tired of. Go get 'em Wayne! You have big shoes to fill with Bill retiring, but I know you will continue to have his support. You'll be great.

We have paused our board development for the time being to sharpen the process to land talents using a focused selection criteria based on skill sets needed for the way we operate in modern times. I will be working with Kate Vescera and Terry Tilton to define and refine our criteria and selection process to ensure that the best available talent is recruited. Keep in mind that a couple more board members will be retiring in the next few years and will need to be replaced.

If you or someone you know would like to join in a program/project committee or the board of directors please let us know. People showing interest will be contacted and a discussion begun to determine their qualifications and best placement if accepted.

Lastly, I'd be lying if I said I haven't felt honored to serve as I have in both the Chapter and the National organization over these many years. As you can see by my board development work mentioned above I am not leaving entirely, but scaling back on any long-term commitments. I have enjoyed meeting you at the meetings and even on Zoom. We work to make your membership as enjoyable as possible as we share this hobby we love so much. Smooth sailing to you all, see you out there some time soon.

Cheers!

Bruce Vancil

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Hi, I'm Wayne Yanda, and welcome to January's "stateroom reading," aka: my first issue of the *Ocean Times* as full-blown Editor. THANK YOU to this issue's contributors!

We welcome to the crew first-time contributor David Hendrickson, who's written ten pieces under the banners of *Steamboat Bill* and *PowerShips*. David's look at Matson's postwar C3 freighters is illustrated with several artfully composed photos he took over 50 years ago.

Member Gordon Ghareeb explores the handful of Victory ships that were converted into passenger liners in *Cinderella Victories*. It is amazing the quality of the passenger spaces that were shoe-horned into these little liners.

Member Kevin Anthoney recounts a "Love Boat" cruise taken on the *Majestic Princess* during the early days of COVID-19 protocols.

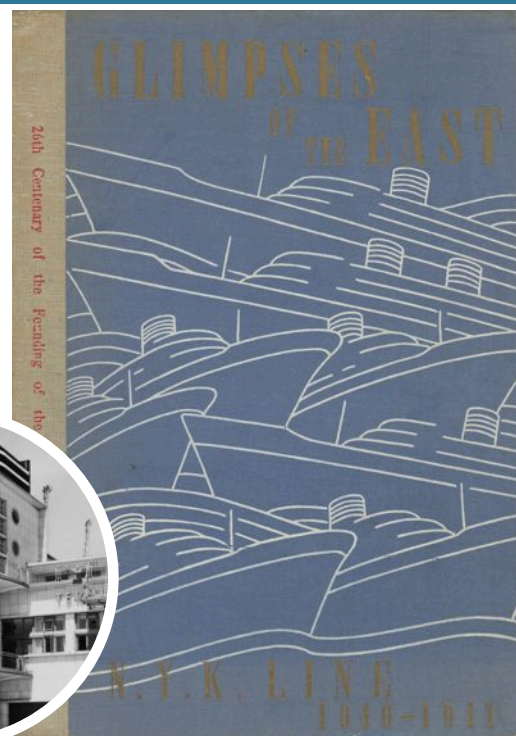
For our *Ship Shot* segment, member Don Persson remembers sailing out of New York on the Italian liner *Rafaello* in the summer of 1971. Outgoing Chapter President Bruce Vancil keeps on *Tramping Cyberspace*.

We take note of the 90th anniversary of the *Lurline's* maiden voyage. (For those who know her, it's not where you think.) After finding a photo of the wreck of the former *Queen Elizabeth* from 50 years ago, we gathered shots from her long career; something to whet the appetite for Kate Vescera's February presentation. We're also introducing what we hope will be a regular feature, *Posted at Sea*, and oh yes, there is a twist to that.

Finally, as you no doubt have noticed, things look a little different: the layout, the masthead, and that's on me. With the latter, I hope to have unified the Atlantic and Pacific. The typeface harkens back to the midcentury Southampton Ocean Terminal (inset, above), while the graphic element – the blue marble – is inspired by the cover of the 1940-1941 edition of NYK Line's *Glimpses of the East*. (I will neither confirm, nor deny, that an inordinate amount of money was spent on the book just for the cover. Collectors, you know *exactly* what I'm talking about.)

What will not change is the amazing content I've had the privilege to read, edit, and layout over the past year as Associate Editor. Thanks to Bill, Jim, Sherrill, and Alan for allowing me to play in the SoCal's sandbox. With their help, and yours, there will be more great stuff come.

Finally (Part II), if you are interested in writing for the *Ocean Times*, do note the submission deadlines to the right, especially if you're doing something time sensitive; for example, marking the anniversary of a maiden voyage, or the anniversary of a disaster. (And no, not *that one*.) 'Til next time!



SUBMISSION DEADLINES

editor.oceantimes@gmail.com

April 2023: February 1, 2023

July 2023: May 1, 2023

October 2023: August 1, 2023

January 2024: October 1, 2023

Coming up in 2023 ...

The Great White Fleet
Lurline at 75

White Star's Last *Britannic*

Matson's C4 Freighters

The *Kungsholm* of 1928

LETTERS

(for Bill Keene) As a fellow editor, I know that you also know that if anything ever goes right with your publication, then the *authors* get all the credit ... And if anything ever goes wrong, the *editor* gets all the blame.

Thanks so much for being such a GREAT editor for so long, and for keeping *Ocean Times* on track ... And for hitting that deadline (which no non-Editor ever knows how hard it is to do) time after time.

Your No. 1 Fan,

Brian Dervin Dillon, PhD.

As we were going to press, we learned of the passing of member Don Persson. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Don leaves us with a few stories in "the hold," so we've not heard the last from him.
RIP.



A US Coast Guard photo of the Hawaiian Shipper taken on November 14, 1942, shows the different silhouette the ship presented compared to Matson's standard postwar C3 freighters. The obvious differences include the lower superstructure, shorter stack, and lack of a raised forecastle.

Note, too, the gub tubs and armament on the bow and stern, and life rafts on the Main Deck.

Alexander Shaw Collection, Steamship Historical Society Archives, www.sshsa.org

surviving prewar freighters – the *Mahimahi*, *Manukai*, *Manulani*, and *Mokihana*.

The company had started a fleet replacement program prior to the war by ordering four C3 freighters in 1940. Prior to that, however, per an article in the June 1936 issue of *The Log*; on May 18, 1936, Matson had requested bids for two types of freighters to be used on its California-Hawaii service. One was to have been 520 feet long by 72 feet wide with geared turbines, twin screws, and a speed of 16 knots. The other would have been 500 feet long with a beam of 68 feet and speed of 13.5 knots. Interestingly, the larger vessel matched very closely the dimensions and speed of the Maritime Commission's C4 freighters of 1944-46 while in size the other was similar in size to the USMC's C3 design. In the end, although bids were received and opened; no ships were built.

To return to the ships contracted for in 1940, they were built under the aegis of the United States Maritime Commission and were given the USMC designation C3-Special. Two were built by the Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company in Kearny, New Jersey, and the other two by Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company in Newport News, Virginia. In naming them *Hawaiian Planter*, *Hawaiian Packer*, *Hawaiian Merchant*, and *Hawaiian Shipper*, a new system was introduced for naming Matson cargo ships which for some time had (mostly) been given names of Hawaiian derivation such as the aforementioned *Mahimahi*, *Manukai*, et al.

C3-Special freighters were noticeably different in appearance from standard C3s. For example, they had no passenger accommodations and therefore one less deck in their superstructures. Nor were they designed with raised forecastles. Yet another difference was that their stacks were not as tall. Otherwise, at 492 feet long and 69.5 feet wide and about 7,800 gross tons they were similar to other C3s. They were powered by steam turbines driving single screws and had a service speed of 16.5 knots. Cruising radius was 12,000 miles. Each had five holds, deep tanks, and refrigerated cargo space. Normal crew size was 43.

The Kearny-built *Hawaiian Merchant* was completed in April 1941 and *Hawaiian Shipper* in May. *Hawaiian Planter* and *Hawaiian Packer* followed in May and June, respectively. Commanded by Captain C.H. Morgan the *Hawaiian Merchant* sailed from New York on May 9, 1941, and arrived at the port of Los Angeles on May 22. From there the new freighter continued to Hawaii. *Hawaiian Packer's* maiden sailing from New York to Honolulu began May 20, 1941. The *Hawaiian Shipper's* first voyage (under charter to the Isthmian Line) set a record for the fastest passage from New York to San Diego. The ship arrived there after 12 days and 30 minutes; eclipsing by a full day the previous best time set nine years earlier by the Panama Pacific Line's *Pennsylvania*. *Hawaiian Shipper* was due at San Pedro, California, on June 16, and was scheduled to sail the next day for Honolulu. The *Hawaiian Merchant*, then on the eastbound leg of its maiden voyage, was also at San Pedro that day. The *San Pedro News Pilot* made note of the coincidence and further reported that included in the 10,000 tons of cargo in the *Hawaiian Shipper's* holds was 100 tons of dolls and other toys, and 43 tons of cranberry sauce.

To paraphrase Robert Burns, the best laid plans of mice and shipowners can sometimes go awry, and so it so it came to pass with the four new C3s which would see little or no commercial service before the United States was drawn into World War II. Three were acquired by the Navy. The fourth was modified to carry troops.

The Navy had the *Hawaiian Planter* converted to a Repair Ship and renamed it USS *Briareus* (AR-12). After initially serving as the cargo ship USS *Delta* (AK-12), the *Hawaiian Packer* was also converted to a Repair ship and redesignated AR-9. *Hawaiian Merchant* became the Submarine Tender USS *Euryale* (AS-22). Each ship served with distinction during the war. The *Euryale* was decommissioned in 1946, and scrapped in 1972. *Delta* was decommissioned in 1970 and scrapped in 1977. *Briareus* was broken up in 1980, although it had been decommissioned years earlier, in 1955.

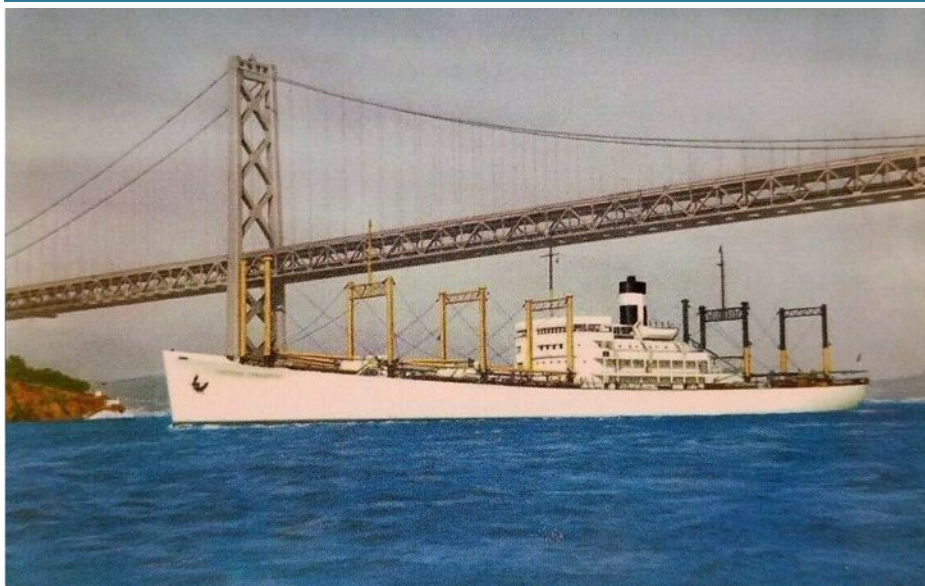
The *Hawaiian Shipper* was Lend-Leased to the British Ministry of War Transport in 1942 and was renamed *Empire Fulmar*. Following its return to the U.S. flag a little less than a year later, the ship reassumed its original name and was converted to a troop transport with a capacity of just over 1,900 persons and sailed under the control of the War Shipping Administration.

Sixteen C3s would be operated by Matson and its affiliate The Oceanic Steamship Company after the war; making Matson/Oceanic along with the Isthmian Line, States Marine Lines, Moore-McCormack Lines, and American President Lines among the principal employers of that class of vessel.

Matson paid \$1,280,730 each for the C3 freighters it purchased after the war. Company executives invited employees to offer recommendations for names for the ships with the proviso that they be prefixed with

Beyond the clutter in the foreground lies the Hawaiian Refiner at San Francisco in July 1968. Note that much of the original cargo handling gear aft of the superstructure had been removed. The bow of the Hawaiian Farmer is at the left.





A postcard of the America Transport of Pacific Transport Lines. The ship looked sharp in PTL livery. American Transport was built as the Hawaiian Shipper, and was one of the four C3-Special freighters Matson ordered in 1940. At some point, the bridge was raised a deck higher, and a taller stack had been fitted.

"Hawaiian" paired with words that "fall into a pattern or category such as occupation, trees, flowers, etc." Some suggestions included reprising *Hawaiian Merchant*, *Planter*, and *Packer* (which was done) along with *Hawaiian Importer*, *Hawaiian Exporter*, and *Hawaiian Scientist* (none of which made the cut).

The postwar Matson cargo fleet was rounded out by the addition of two Liberty ships in 1946, and another in 1947. They were followed by three Victory ships in 1955; and between 1960 and 1964 by five C4s. The Oceanic Steamship's fleet initially consisted of C2 freighters.

The *Hawaiian Shipper* was the only C3-Special freighter to sail for Matson after the war; albeit briefly. It was sold to Pacific Transport Lines in 1948 and was renamed *America Transport*. As with PTL's other C3s, deluxe passenger accommodations were added to the ship. Pacific Transport Lines was bought by the States Steamship Company in 1957 and States renamed the ship *Washington* and later *Michigan*. *Michigan* was conveyed to the Waterman Steamship Corporation in 1969 and renamed *Morning Light*, a name previously borne by a Waterman-owned C2. The *Morning Light* was sold for scrapping in Taiwan in 1973.

The other postwar C3s were the second *Hawaiian Planter* (ex-*Sea Pegasus*), the second *Hawaiian Merchant* (ex-*Sea Skimmer*), and the second *Hawaiian Packer* (ex-*Sea Scamp*). The rest were named *Hawaiian Banker* (ex-*Sea Centaur*), *Hawaiian Builder* (ex-*Sea Blenny*), *Hawaiian Citizen* (ex-*Sea Wren*), *Hawaiian Craftsman* (ex-*Marguerite LeHand*), *Hawaiian Educator* (ex-*Sea Hare II*), *Hawaiian Farmer* (ex-*Sea Sturgeon*), *Hawaiian Fisherman* (ex-*Sea Falcon*), *Hawaiian Pilot*, (ex-USS *Burleigh*, APA-95), *Hawaiian Rancher* (ex-*Sea Ray*), *Hawaiian Refiner* (ex-*Sea Fiddler*), *Hawaiian Retailer* (ex-USS *Dade*, APA-99), and *Hawaiian Wholesaler*, which was the former USS *Hanover* (APA-116). All were built in 1944 or 1945.

Cargo capacity was in excess of 500,000 cubic feet. In addition to general cargo the ships could carry 2,770 short tons of molasses that was loaded and discharged by special pumps at the rate of 250 tons per hour. To accommodate sugar, permanent sheathing was installed in holds.

Aside from sugar (either bagged or in bulk), molasses, and pineapple; paying freight included mail, household goods, fertilizer, lumber, foodstuffs, military cargo, livestock, vehicles, and countless other items including Christmas trees (annual Christmas Tree ships to Hawaii were a tradition).

The C3s were to be deployed on a 5½-day service to Hawaii from San Francisco and Los Angeles (prewar passage times had been between 7 and 11 days). There were to be departures every two weeks from Seattle, Tacoma, and Portland, and in conjunction with the Isthmian Line, there would be weekly sailings from East and Gulf Coast ports to Hawaii with a transit time of 18 days.

West Coast ports of call ranged from San Diego in Southern California to Westminster and Vancouver in British Columbia. Principal ports in the Islands were Honolulu, Kahului, Nawiliwili, Port Allen, and Hilo. Occasionally a ship was diverted from the beaten path as happened in late 1951 when the *Hawaiian Educator* took a load of bagged granulated sugar from the California and Hawaiian Sugar Company refinery in Crockett, California, to Japan. The Oceanic Steamship Company offered monthly departures to Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Fiji, and Tahiti.

A voyage by the *Hawaiian Rancher* scheduled to depart San Francisco on November 21, 1951, would have been typical. The ship was due at Honolulu on November 27th, at Hilo on the 29th, and at Kahului on the 30th before returning to Honolulu from where it was scheduled to depart on December 3 for Los Angeles. ETA there was December 9, and the ship was due at Alameda on the 12th. Although there was no indication on the sailing schedule, the *Hawaiian Rancher* was to have also called at Mahukona, Kauai; a sugar loading port.

Speaking of The Oceanic Steamship Company; during 1961 three C3s were conveyed from the Matson fleet to that august firm and exchanged names with three Oceanic C2s that in turn joined Matson's fleet. The *Hawaiian Banker* was renamed *Sierra*, *Hawaiian Pilot* was renamed *Sonoma*, and *Hawaiian Wholesaler* became the *Ventura*. The C2 *Sierra* was named *Hawaiian Banker*. The former *Sonoma* became the *Hawaiian Pilot* and *Ventura* was renamed *Hawaiian Wholesaler*. Oceanic's fourth C2, the *Alameda*, was renamed *Hawaiian Trader*, taking the name of a Victory ship that had been disposed of that year.

Hawaiian Citizen, *Farmer*, *Pilot*, *Rancher*, *Refiner*, and *Retailer* had accommodations for a dozen passengers in two and three berth staterooms, each equipped with wardrobe, chest of drawers, plus shower, toilet, and wash basin. Deck chairs were provided gratis, as were a variety of board and other games. In 1961, excluding add-ons the double occupancy rate for the least expensive two berth outside cabin with facilities aboard the *Matsonia* was \$315 while an equivalent cabin on one of the C3s went for \$205. Two berth cabins with facilities on the *Lurline* were significantly more costly.

Copy in a Matson freighter travel folder from the 1950s read in part: For "complete relaxation – go to sea! Sailing in a cargo ship is today's truest, saltiest version of 'sailing before the mast'. You can watch seamen at work and learn how they handle a ship. You see the practical workings of transocean trade, giving you the real savor of seafaring with all its age-old charm."

Hyperbole notwithstanding, the C3 passenger experience was several notches below that experienced by travelers in Matson passenger ships, but the freighters were comfortable enough and offered an affordable, more leisurely and informal

Hawaiian Farmer looking hard used is seen in July 1968 while at a shipyard in San Francisco.



travel option to and from the Islands or South Pacific. Interisland passages of one to five days' duration could also be had.

Of necessity, Matson, like Seatrain Lines and Sea-Land Service, became adept at converting ships to suit the unique requirements of its services. Four significant C3 conversions were undertaken. One was the transformation of the *Hawaiian Fisherman* into an auto carrier. Another was the conversion of the *Hawaiian Citizen* into the line's first cellular containership. The *Hawaiian Craftsman* and *Hawaiian Planter* were rebuilt to carry containers later. Other C3s were modified to increase their container capacities and later five C4s would undergo conversions to suit them for the Hawaiian trade. More about the C4s anon.

There is ample room for discussion as to who among West Coast shipping lines utilized containers first. Both Matson and the Alaska Steamship Company were early proponents of moving cargo in sealed containers, or vans as Alaska Steam called them. In any event, the August 31, 1958, sailing of the *Hawaiian Merchant* from San Francisco with 20 containers as deck cargo was a watershed event for the Matson Navigation Company and for shipping in the Pacific as it marked the first "lift on-lift off" container service to Hawaii (the *Hawaiian Merchant* can be considered the Matson equivalent of Sea-Land's pioneering *Ideal X*).

The first American flag, cellular containership in the Pacific was the *Hawaiian Citizen*. Transformation of that ship commenced during August of 1959 at the Willamette Iron and Steel Company facility in Portland, Oregon, which had previously converted the Mariner freighters *Free State* and *Pine Tree Mariner* into the passenger ships *Monterey* and *Mariposa*. Like the Mariner conversions, the work on the *Hawaiian Citizen* was extensive. It included removing original cargo handling gear, adding another deck to increase the ship's depth, widening hatches and holds, installing cells to allow container stowage below decks, and shortening the superstructure slightly and removing the passenger accommodations. Whereas the later *Pacific Banker* and *Pacific Trader* would be equipped with

A busy day at Honolulu in August 1968. The *Ventura*, formerly the *Hawaiian Wholesaler*, had just gotten underway when this picture was taken. Behind the *Ventura* is another Matson C3 and either the *Hawaiian Queen* or *Hawaiian Monarch* was docked beyond.



gantry cranes; from the start *Hawaiian Citizen* was to be worked only by shoreside equipment.

As rebuilt, the *Hawaiian Citizen* was somewhat ungainly looking, but aesthetics contribute nothing to the corporate exchequer. Pertinent to the bottom line was that in spite of growing pains the ship, which could accommodate 336 containers plus another 72 that were refrigerated, was a success.

Captain William R. O'Brien was in command of the *Hawaiian Citizen* when its first voyage to Honolulu as a containership finally commenced on May 19, 1960. "Finally", because the ship had been idled at Portland since April 26 because of a dispute over the size of the unlicensed crew. The unions wanted a 51-man crew, but an arbitrator eventually ruled that 48 were sufficient, and it was with that number that the ship presumably sailed.

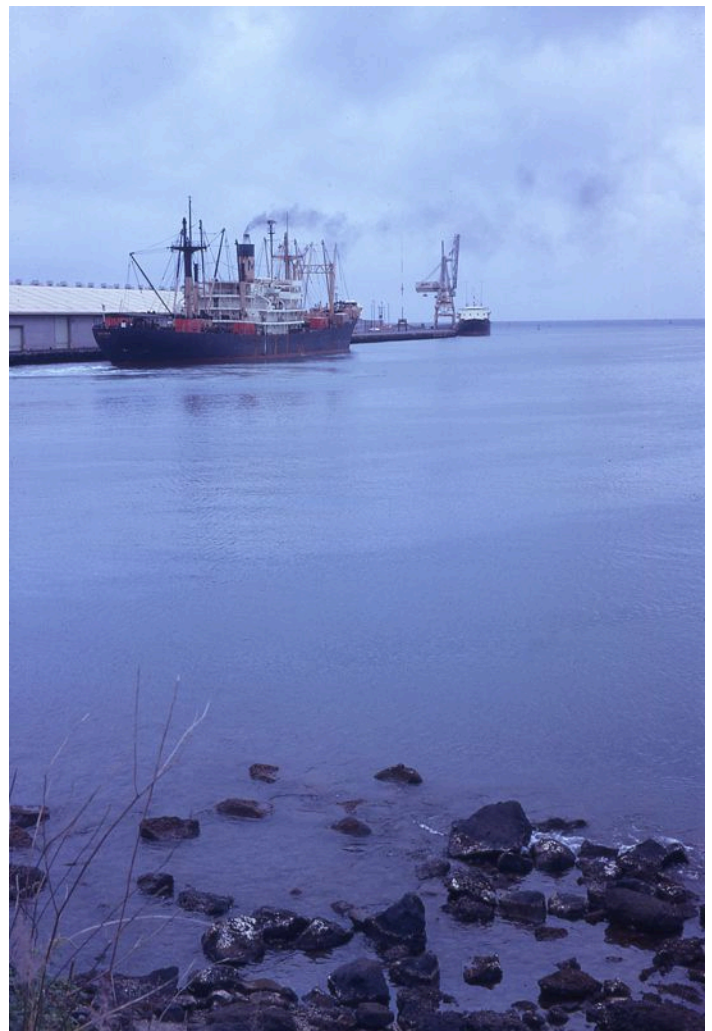
At this point, a comparison to the Pan-Atlantic Steamship Corporation's pioneering containership conversions *Gateway City*, *Fairland* et al, which were rebuilt in 1956-57 and were 23 feet shorter than the *Hawaiian Citizen*, might be of interest. Those ships had a capacity of 226 of P-A's 35 foot containers. The later Alaska Steamship Company Liberty ship conversions *Nadina* and *Tonsina* could carry 176 of ASC's 24 foot boxes. Larger Matson containerships were in the offing, as they were for Sea-Land Service as Pan-Atlantic would be renamed. Alaska Steamship continued to convert ships and add container capacity, too, but it did not survive beyond 1971.

Also in 1960 came the conversion and entry into service of the *Hawaiian Fisherman*, which was modified internally by Pacific Ship Repair in San Francisco to carry vehicles. Initial capacity was 464 cars – later increased to 487. Reportedly the first ship of its type in the Pacific, the *Hawaiian Fisherman* debuted as a vehicle carrier on December 28, 1960, after loading at Pier 43 in San Francisco. The ship was renamed *Hawaiian Motorist* in 1962 and was subsequently modified to carry a substantial number of containers and had its bridge raised. Sea-Land's *Detroit*, also a C3, was a similar conversion.

In 1956, the Matson Navigation Company applied for a subsidy to operate a cargo service from U.S. East Coast ports between Maine and Florida to Hawaii, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, and elsewhere in Asia. For a variety of reasons the service, which would have been known as the Matson Orient Line, never got off the ground, as it were, and plans were dropped in 1960.

Fast forward to 1967 when the *Hawaiian Craftsman* and *Hawaiian Planter* were dispatched to Japan where they were lengthened by 52 feet 6 inches and converted into containerships. Their superstructures were modified with the most obvious changes being that their bridges were raised and new more modern looking funnels recalling those of the *Hawaiian Queen* and *Hawaiian Monarch* replaced the original stacks. Like the *Hawaiian Citizen*, a deck was

The Oceanic Steamship Company's Sonoma was photographed after getting underway from its berth at Honolulu in March 1968. Matson's interisland containership Hawaiian Princess is in the distance. As were other Oceanic ships, Sonoma which was previously the Hawaiian Pilot, was named for a county in California.



added to deepen the hull but as has been noted, unlike the *Hawaiian Citizen*, the two ships were equipped with gantry cranes. Once the work was completed container capacity was 464 and the ships were much better looking than the *Hawaiian Citizen*. Matson did hedge its bets. Both vessels retained number 1 hold and its associated cargo handling gear.

The two ships instituted containership service from the U.S. West Coast to Japan with the first sailing being undertaken by the *Pacific Trader* (ex-*Hawaiian Planter*) which departed the port of Los Angeles on October 8, 1967, and from Oakland on October 12. *Pacific Banker*, the former *Hawaiian Craftsman*, followed on October 26 from Los Angeles and October 29 from Oakland. Sailings thereafter were approximately every three weeks.

The venture did well and the *Hawaiian Monarch* was added to it. Then in early 1970, it was expanded to include the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Taiwan but the service was terminated in mid-October of that year in part due to crippling work stoppages by maritime and shore side unions that, combined with mechanical problems with the ships, wrought havoc with maintaining reliable schedules. The *Pacific Banker* and *Pacific Trader* were laid up and eventually sold to the Orient Overseas Line which renamed them *Oriental Mariner* and *Oriental Enterprise*. They were scrapped in 1979. The *Hawaiian Monarch* had in the meanwhile resumed Hawaiian service

Matson's C3s suffered their share of casualties; several of which were quite serious. In December 1949, while en route from Crockett to Alameda, wallboard stowed in number 2 hold of the *Hawaiian Rancher* caught fire and burned fiercely for several hours until firefighters from Alameda, in conjunction with the ship's crew and an Oakland fire boat, gained the upper hand. The water pumped into the ship eventually caused it to list against the pier at Alameda after it docked there but the *Hawaiian Rancher* was dewatered, repaired, and resumed service.

The *Hawaiian Pilot* collided with the Luckenbach Steamship Company freighter *Jacob Luckenbach*, another C3, in the early morning hours of July 14, 1953. The latter had sailed earlier from San Francisco for the Far East. *Hawaiian Pilot* was inbound from Hawaii. The Luckenbach freighter was badly damaged and sank quickly. *Hawaiian Pilot* sustained considerable bow damage but stood by and picked up the crew of the *Jacob Luckenbach* before moving on to San Francisco.

Another incident involved the *Hawaiian Citizen* which was struck by the surfacing submarine USS *Permit* (SSN-594) during May 1962. Both vessels were damaged, and limped into San Francisco to be repaired.

By the early 1970s the C3s had been sold to shipbreakers or otherwise disposed of with the exception of *Hawaiian Citizen* which was not scrapped until 1981 (it served as a relief ship in later years). Oceanic's *Sierra* was sold in 1970 and renamed *Vantage Endeavor*. Sisters

Waterman Steamship Corporation's Morning Light was built as the Hawaiian Shipper. The ship was in Oakland when this picture was taken in late October 1969.



Sonoma and *Ventura* were conveyed with the *Mariposa* and *Monterey* to the Pacific Far East Line in January 1971. The *Hawaiian Motorist* was sold to Valor Navigation Company (Sea King Lines) in late 1973 and renamed *Grand Unity*. *Hawaiian Educator* had gone to Central Gulf Lines in 1964 and was renamed *Green Ridge*. The *Hawaiian Packer* was sold in 1966 and renamed *Pecos*.

Hawaiian Retailer had an interesting, though relatively brief afterlife. After it was traded in to the Maritime Administration in 1964 in exchange for the troop transport *Marine Devil* the *Hawaiian Retailer* continued to be operated by Matson, but was laid up in 1965. However, the ship was reactivated and used on the Vietnam War sealift. Painted all grey, the *Hawaiian Retailer* continued to be operated by Matson until being laid up again in 1967. It was scrapped in 1970.

More about the Matson Navigation Company's involvement in the Vietnam War might be of at least parenthetical interest: The *Hawaiian Merchant* made at least one voyage to Vietnam in 1967, and in addition to the *Hawaiian Retailer* the *Hope Victory*, *Lindenwood Victory*, *Loyola Victory*, *Muhlenburg Victory*, *Occidental Victory*, *Queens Victory*, *St Augustine Victory*, and *Xavier Victory* were operated under General Agency Agreement for the government.

As the decade of the 1970s began it was ever more apparent that containerships were the future of ocean transportation and Matson with its more than ten years' experience in containership operation was ahead of the curve. Newbuildings *Hawaiian Progress* and *Hawaiian Enterprise* were set to join the fleet in 1970. They would be followed by RO-ROs like the *Lurline* and *Matsonia* in 1973 and by the containerships *Maui* and *Kauai* in 1978 and 1979.

A final note about containerships: After Seatrain Lines' Hawaii-Guam service which had begun with considerable fanfare in 1969, ceased operations in 1974, Matson bought it and chartered the *Transchamplain*, *Transoneida*, and *Transontario*, each a converted T2 tanker with a capacity of between 392 and 435 of Seatrain's 27 foot boxes. By most accounts the ex-Seatrain ships were frequently plagued with mechanical ills and Matson finally got rid of them in 1979.

Editor's Note ... Part 2, regarding Matson's C4 freighters, will appear in a future issue of the Ocean Times.



As time passed, the C3s were modified to enable them to carry more containers. In this picture, the *Hawaiian Merchant* has a substantially larger deck load of containers than the 20 boxes that had been carried on the ship's pioneering voyage to Honolulu on August 31, 1958.

Henry W. Uhle Collection, Steamship Historical Society Archives, www.sshsa.org

This aerial stern quarter view of the *Hawaiian Citizen* was probably taken after the ship left the yard in Portland for California to load for the first voyage to Hawaii. It clearly shows the reconfigured hatch covers on the new Main Deck, and the shortened superstructure and relocated lifeboats. A small number of containers could also be stowed forward of the mast on the fantail.

Henry W. Uhle Collection, Steamship Historical Society Archives, www.sshsa.org





Raffaello ... Getting Underway

It was a perfect July 5 in 1971 when my wife and I boarded the TSS Raffaello of the Italian Line at the midtown Manhattan Cruise Terminal. Italian Line used to depart from Pier 84 along with my former employer's ships of American Export Lines.

We were escorted to our beautiful cabin, B-37, aft on B Deck. It was large with two large beds and a bath with a large tub/shower. But we immediately left to explore the huge ship (902 feet long, 102 feet beam, 46,000 grt, 26.5 knots at speed). Thirty public rooms! Six swimming pools! Two garages! A cinema seating 500 people! Lounges and bars were everywhere as this was a three-class ship.

The ship was packed with passengers and visitors but right after we heard the "All visitors ashore" announcement at 1130, the ship began to empty out.

Exactly at 1145, two large Moran Towing Company tugs tied up to our port side forward and aft. These tugs were needed to pull us away from the pier and help us turn facing south in the Hudson River.

The docking pilot and the harbor pilot were pacing the port bridge wing. Suddenly, at noon, we heard three long really beautiful blasts – deafening – from the ship's whistle. All lines were removed, and after a quick high-pitched whistle from the tugs, we began to move backwards and away from the pier. The Moran tugs at our stern began to push us sideways and in just minutes we were facing down river and slowly getting underway.

We were headed for the Narrows, then out past Ambrose Lighthouse; on our way to the Caribbean. Ambrose used to be the famous lightship, but was replaced in 1967 with a 90-foot-high lighthouse. I really missed seeing the small lightship pitching like a rubber duck in a bathtub as I often returned from Europe as crew on a P-2 transport.

We passed Hoboken, where I once worked for American Export Lines, then the giant Colgate clock, past the Statue of Liberty, Staten Island, under the Verrazano Bridge, where we slowed to drop off our pilots. After we sped up, Ambrose lighthouse was off the port side, and following a small turn south, we were on our way.

Seven days later, there was Ambrose Lighthouse and her great light at 0500. Moran tugs met us near the battery at the tip of Manhattan, and by 0600, we were back to where we started out seven wonderful days ago.



photo & story
by Don Persson



The Cinderella Victories

story & images by Gordon Ghareeb

At the close of the Second World War, the United States Maritime Administration had 534 modern Victory ships at its disposal. These freighters were all built in 1944 and 1945 with an eye to the incipient Allied victory over the Axis powers and as such were intended to be the backbone of America's reemerging merchant marine. Running at a reliable speed of 16 knots, the steamers were capable of hauling vast amounts of cargo anywhere in the world. Although most of the Victory ships remained under the American flag, over 100 were allotted to other nations who had an urgent need for these seagoing beasts of burden.

By 1947 the all too familiar silhouette of the Victory ship could be seen in nearly every port in the world. Many of the operating companies fitted their Victories to carry up to twelve passengers without too much alteration. A few owners temporarily carried immigrating populations to their new countries of adoption in existing troopship quarters below deck that were left over from the war. All said and done, the post war Victory ship was about as unglamorous as a vessel could be.

(above) The Alcoa Steamship Company purchased the last three Victory ships while they were still on the launching ways, giving them the opportunity to turn them into ultra-modern combi-liners.

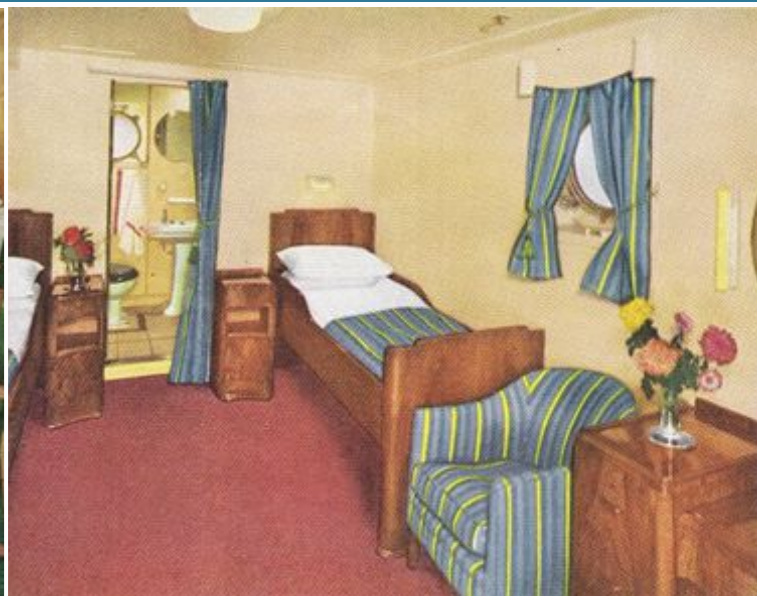
(below) An excellent broadside photo of the Boulder Victory, taken the summer of 1945. (Still Pictures, National Archives)

Famed naval architect George G. Sharp designed the Victory ship in 1944, and in just two years American shipyards turned out 534 such vessels. Intended to be work horses of the sea, a handful of them were turned into passenger vessels for new careers, not unlike Cinderella being transformed from a lowly servant to a glamorous debutante.





(left) The dining room aboard the *Lismoria*. The space was created by enlarging the original Victory ship crew mess on Main Deck. We are looking aft with the portholes on the starboard side.



(right) A deluxe stateroom with private facilities aboard the *Laurentia*. This cabin is on the after end of the Boat Deck being where Victory ship rooms #16 and #17 were originally located. The view is looking aft to the newly created head.

Except for nineteen of them. For varying reasons, these nondescript freighters were reconstructed into ocean liners, carrying differing numbers of between 55 and 1,000 passengers in varying degrees of comfort - even luxury - while still offering vast amounts of cargo stowage. Yugoslavia rebuilt the former *St. Lawrence Victory* into the *Hrvatska* in 1949 carrying 60 passengers in transatlantic service between Split and New York as the flagship of the new European nation. Argentina had six Victory ships, the former *Gustavus Victory*, *La Crosse Victory*, *Nyu Victory*, *Rock Hill Victory*, *Smith Victory* and the *William and Mary Victory*, all refitted following the war to offer comfortable accommodations for close to 800 immigrants between Italy and the Argentine. The *Buenos Aires*, formerly the *Smith Victory*, hit the world's headlines in 1947 when she carried the First Lady of Argentina, Eva Peron, home from her famous Rainbow Tour of Europe.

The Donaldson Atlantic Line of Scotland obtained two vessels, the *Medina Victory* and the *Taos Victory*, the latter of which was built right here at Calship on Terminal Island. The pair were modified in 1948 to carry 55 first class passengers in traditionally understated British style between Glasgow and Montreal, while also making extended voyages each winter through the Panama Canal to Vancouver via the American West Coast. Rechristened the *Laurentia* and *Lismoria*, the degree of luxury onboard was a far cry from the cold steel decks and bare pipes of the Victory ship. Finished in rich woodwork, the twin cargo-liners offered a comfortable - albeit unexciting - seagoing journey to and from Scotland.



S.S. ALCOA CLIPPER



Then there were the three Victories that were reconfigured on the stocks before launching and completed in 1947 as the *Alcoa Cavalier*, *Alcoa Clipper* and the *Alcoa Corsair*, each carrying 95 passengers for a 16-day round trip service to the Caribbean out of New Orleans. The American trio offered a scheduled weekly departure from the Big Easy in unabashedly first class luxury with accommodations that were lavish, snappy and bright. They also hauled general cargo outbound and returned with their holds full of bauxite to feed the hungry aluminum mills of the owning parent company. Combining excellent cuisine, service and décor coupled with reliable cargo operation, the three new ships were a hit from the beginning.

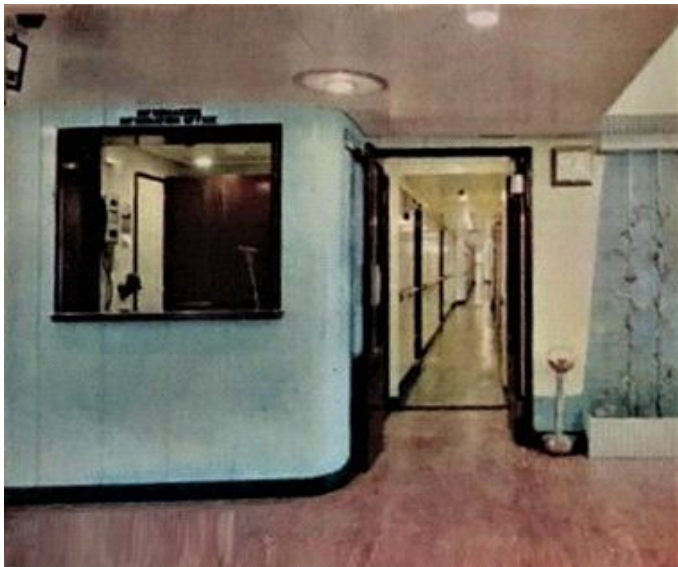
Two more units, the *Vassar Victory* and *Wooster Victory*, were rebuilt in Italy to become the *Castel Bianco* and *Castel Verde* in 1947, each offering accommodation for almost 500 passengers on Sitmar Line's immigrant run between Italy and South America. Sold again in 1957 to the Spanish

(left) A beautiful example of midcentury modern seagoing décor. The dining room of the *Alcoa Clipper* was created in a space intended to house the galley and portside after cabin #31 in the Victory ship layout.

(right) Looking forward in the passenger lounge of the *Alcoa Corsair*. This room was crafted out of the original officer's mess after it had been enlarged.

(below) An artist's rendering of the *Castel Verde* as she looked in a 1952 Sitmar Line postcard.





(top) The Begona heading out to sea in 1974. Hard to believe that this vessel started out as an ordinary Victory ship in 1945.

(left) The information office aboard the Begona. Picture this same area aboard the Lane Victory ... We are standing on the starboard side of Main Deck, just in front of the superstructure looking forward (this is all open deck on the Lane Victory). The corridor bulkhead on our left is where the coaming for #3 cargo hatch is located and the doors along that corridor open here into passenger staterooms.

(right) A sitting room aboard the Begona looking into the adjoining bedroom. Four such deluxe suites, along with four standard cabins, staircases and public lavatories, were all built in the area of upper tween deck in #2 cargo hold – the similar location aboard the Lane Victory is now the #2 Museum housing the Sand Pebbles reciprocating engine.

Line, the duo were modified once more, this time being enlarged and modernized to carry 940 passengers in two classes. As the *Begona* and *Montserrat*, the pair cashed in on the burgeoning traffic from the Iberian Peninsula to Central and South America.

The Dutch were not far behind with their 1950 plans for rebuilding the *Costa Rica Victory*, *Cranston Victory* and *La Grande Victory* in Rotterdam to become the *Groote Beer*, *Zuiderkruis* and *Waterman*. Operated by Holland America on behalf of the Netherlands government, the triumvirate sailed on seasonal routes transporting close to 1,000 passengers each. In the Dutch makeover, there was no cargo space retained as the holds were filled with quite modern facilities for sojourning passengers to idyl their time away at sea. The vessels were even fitted with a cinema theater way down in lower #2 cargo hold where the *Lane Victory* now has a cache of concrete keel blocks donated by the Long Beach Naval Shipyard to keep her stable and on an evenly balanced keel.



(top left) This was the upper tween deck of #3 cargo hold aboard a Victory ship, here seen as the dining room of the Waterman. The view is looking forward along the starboard side. The staircase on the left is where the cargo hatch down to #3 tween decks used to be. Note that the ceiling joiner work has been crafted to snugly wrap around the strong beams supporting the Main Deck above.

(top right) Using all available volume for passenger facilities, the cinema aboard the Zuiderkruis was built in lower #2 cargo hold. This view is from the port side looking to starboard. The stage is on the forward bulkhead. The room could seat 184 people and was fitted with a piano for concerts and church services as well.

(left) The Groote Beer, here transporting troops in her expansive passenger quarters in 1964. The photo gives a good idea of how her original Victory ship structure was integrated as part of her transformation into ocean liner.

But of all the passenger configurations and services the former Victory ships found themselves in, my favorites are the 1948 transformation of the *Atchison Victory* and *United Victory* into the transatlantic combi-ships *Mohamed Ali El Kebir* and *Cleopatra* by the venerable Khedivial Mail Line of Egypt. These two unimposing craft had accommodation added to carry 75 passengers in extremely comfortable, air conditioned surroundings. The steamers operated a languorous Mediterranean round trip cruise-like service from New York taking 51 days to complete and calling at ten ports. The passage between New York and Marseilles alone took a full eleven days. Another nine days were spent docked in their home port of Alexandria.

Although freight capacity was little affected by their modernization to cargo-liners, the two ships were fitted with an expansive teak planked lido area and swimming pool constructed on an extension of the Boat



(left) The Cleopatra loading cargo for her next 51-day round-trip voyage to Egypt. This photo, taken in 1959, shows her at pier 30 in New York's East River.



(right) A highly stylizing artist's impression of the dining room aboard the Mohamed Ali El Kebir and Cleopatra. While overexaggerating the volume of the salon, the elegance and panache of a transatlantic voyage on these two former Victory ships is perfectly captured.

Deck running from the main superstructure aft to the mainmast house. The dining room, created in the after end of #3 upper tween decks cargo hold, occupied the full width of the ship and was reached by a grand staircase winding down from the Main Deck above. Cuisine was French and Middle Eastern, while service onboard was of the highest order. What a way to while away nearly two months and get to see the antiquities of the Pharaohs to boot. A detailed account of one of those voyages might also make a great further reading in an upcoming issue of the Ocean Times. Nothing wrong with being an armchair traveler ...

The nineteen Victory ships that found new life in the business of passenger transportation all served profitably through the 1950s. With the onslaught of cheaper, more efficient freight handling (can you say "containerized cargo"?) and the obvious advantages of traveling from point A to point B in a few hours aboard a jet juxtaposed against weeks at sea, the financial viability of the combi-ships was undermined and all were sold for scrap by 1974. Not bad for a bunch of ordinary cargo vessels that were built assembly-line fashion with little to distinguish them from the rest of the litter. But then, there is the *Lane Victory* just across the bridges in San Pedro – one of those plain vessels that is still going strong after having been built over 78 years ago right here in Wilmington. Not bad. Not bad at all.

(below) The ss Lane Victory is still going strong after seeing service in three wars: WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Here she is today at berth 52 in San Pedro.



Visit www.lanevictory.org for hours of operation, and how to plan your visit.



S.S. "AMERICA" Ballroom Stage

6264

(left) This card of America's Cabin Class Ballroom focuses on Neptune's Chariot, a 20 foot long mural by New York artist Andre Durenceau. Like the Queen Mary, many of the artworks installed in the America's public spaces remained in place during the liner's troopship service in World War II. Unlike those other works, this mural did not fare well; replaced with a circus theme by fellow New Yorker Charles Baskerville.

This card was found quite by chance. Collectors know many cards were published with the interiors of the Manhattan and Washington. To our knowledge, no postwar postcards with the America's interiors exist.



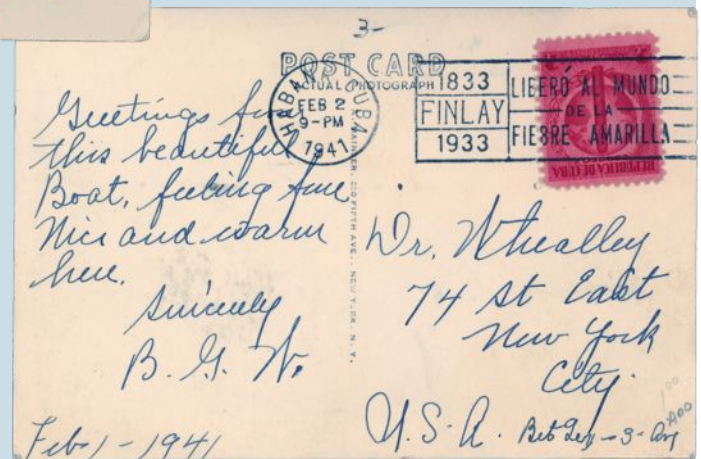
This is a new feature for the *Ocean Times* – not sure how it'll play – but we'll see how

it goes. The premise is a postcard from a ship *not* on its normal route.

Entering service on August 10, 1940, the *America* was unable to make her maiden voyage on the North Atlantic run. Thanks to the war in Europe, that would have to wait until 1946. However, United States Lines couldn't let her sit idle, for a ship is designed and built to generate revenues for her owners. They sent her on a series of popular cruises, many fully booked, primarily to the West Indies, with at least one to California.

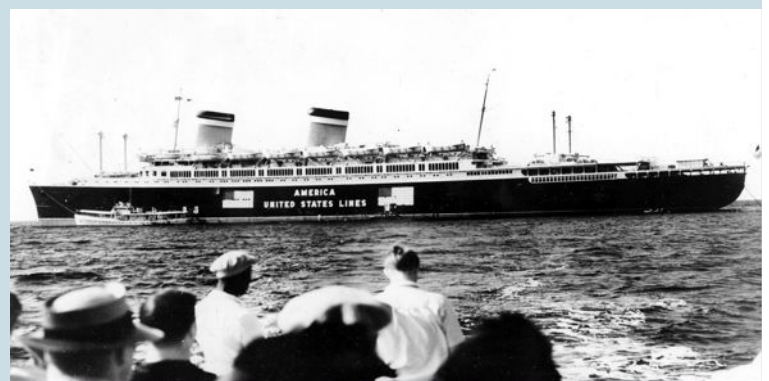
On May 28, 1941, while docked in Puerto Rico, *America* received her draft notice, and was formally acquired by the US Navy on June 1. Renamed the USS *West Point*, the conversion to a troopship boosted her to capacity to over 7,600, a far cry from her peacetime 1,200.

Prior to her postwar refurbishment at the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Smyth, Urquhart, and Marckwald, the ship's original interior designers, sent artist Austin Purves, Jr. to the *America* on a scouting mission. He found the bulk of the artworks left onboard during the war needing only minor touch ups and a general cleaning. The mural shown above, however, could not be saved, and it was replaced, making this postcard very unique.

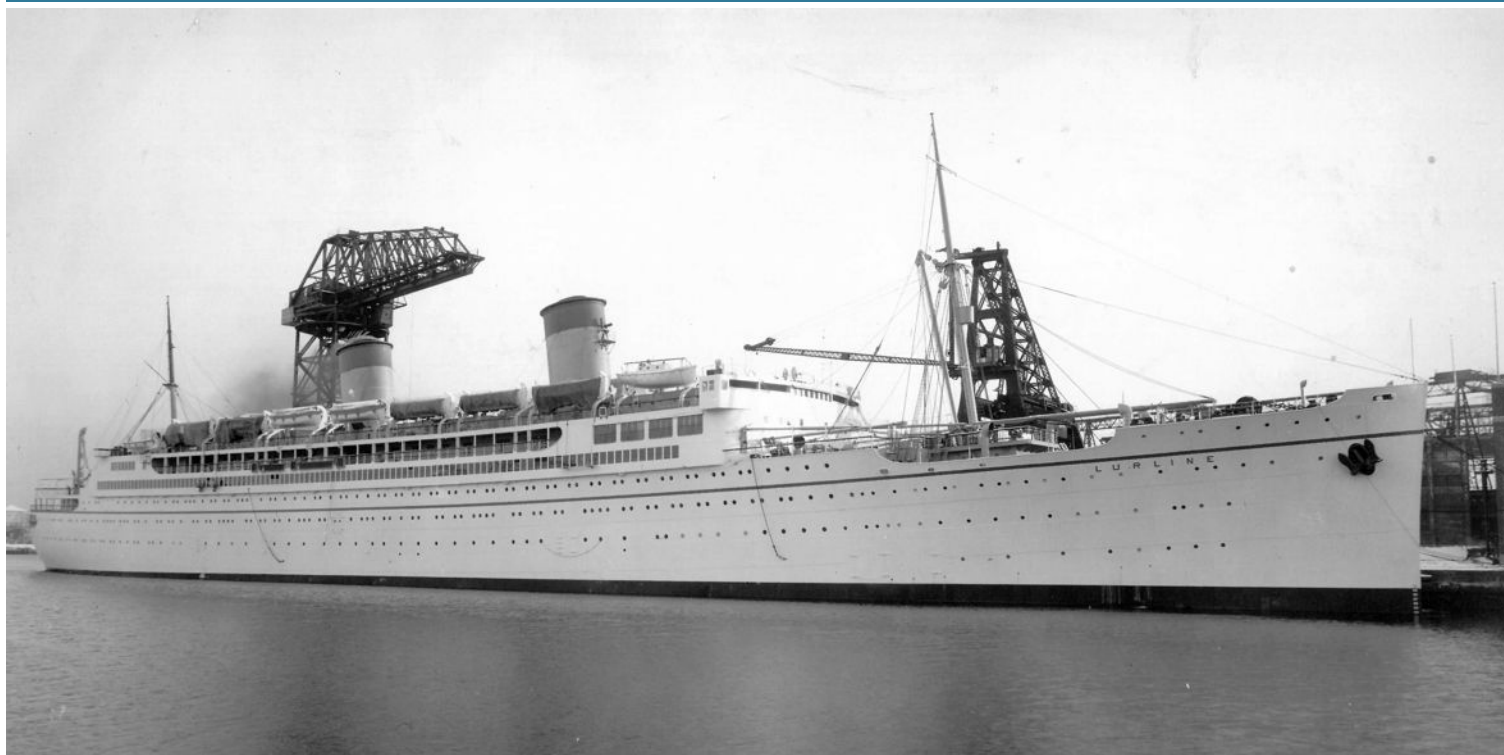


(above) The reverse of the card with terse, but pleasant comments on the weather, and the "boat." Now, while not technically stamped "paquebot," with the Havana, Cuba postmark, this card is definitely off the beaten path for a liner meant to be sailing a bit further north.

(below) The *America*, with her neutrality markings, during a December 1940 cruise. Judging by the wake, the tender is heading for a port visit.



Have a submission for *Posted at Sea*?
Send scans to: editor.oceantimes@gmail.com.



Lurline nears completion at Bethlehem Shipbuilding's Fore River Plant in Quincy, Massachusetts. The Matson "M" would appear on her stacks upon payback of the government loan enabling her construction.

From National Geographic, December 1932, an ad for the *Lurline's* first voyage.

S.S. LURLINE



SOUTH SEAS & ORIENTAL CRUISE

FIRST VOYAGE of a great new liner... the lure of 20 ports... the wonders of 14 lands! At an attractively low cost, a 25,000 mile itinerary, starred by direct calls at Port Moresby and Bali... optional tour to Angkor Wat.

Sails from New York . January 12
from San Francisco . January 27
from Los Angeles . January 28

FARES
From NEW YORK . . . \$1585 up
From CALIFORNIA . . . \$1250 up

Reservations should be made *now*. At any travel agency or

THE OCEANIC STEAMSHIP CO.
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The Immortal *Lurline* at 90

story & images by Wayne Yanda

Ninety years ago, in January 1933, the last of Matson's new trio entered service. The first two, *Mariposa* and *Monterey*, sailed from California to the South Seas: Tahiti, Australia, and New Zealand; *Lurline* was to work in tandem with the *Malolo*: roundtrip service to Hawaii.

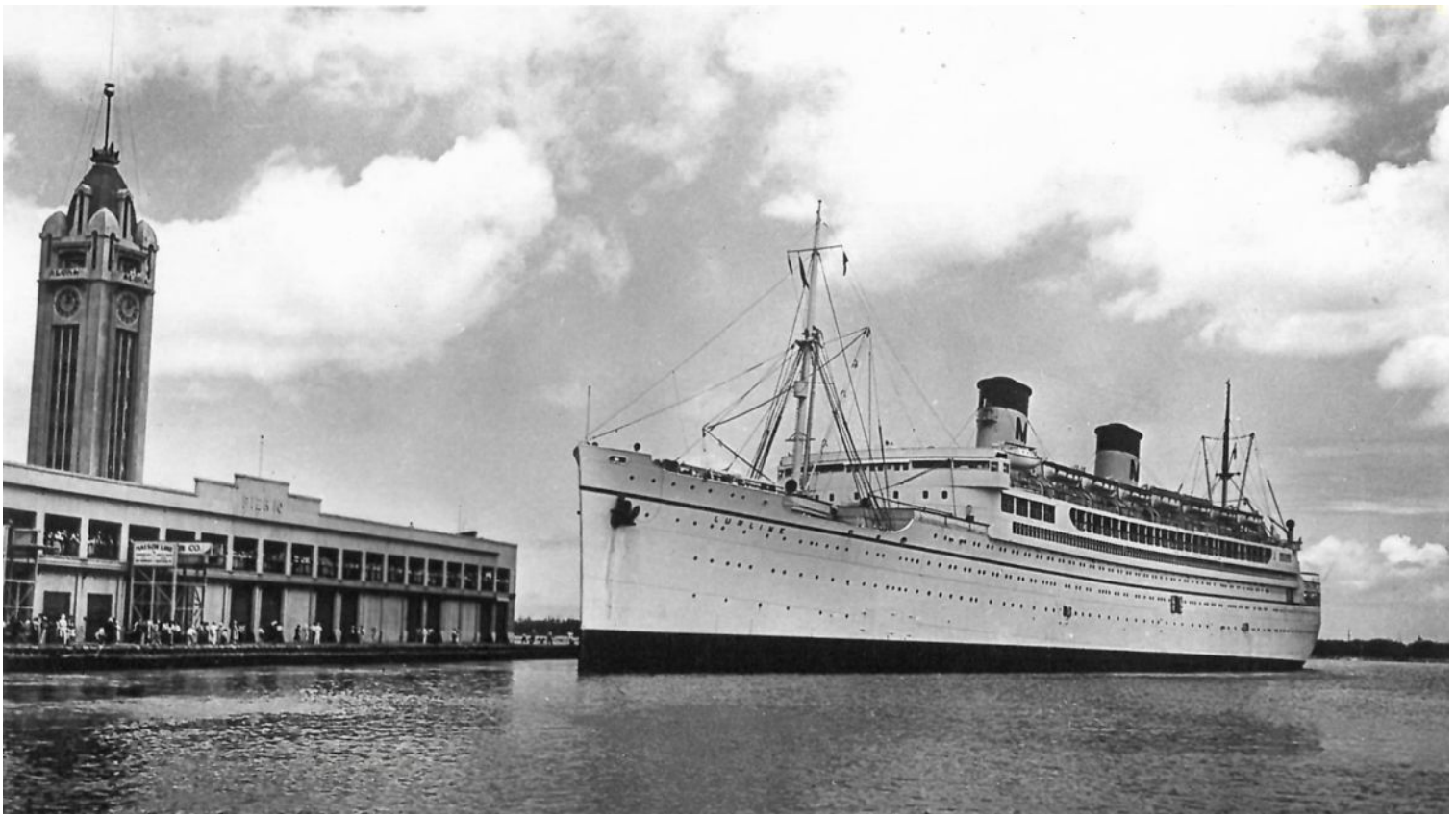
The \$8,000,000 liner was the third ship to bear the name *Lurline*; the first, a 3,000-ton barkentine from 1887; the second, a 9,000-ton steamer built in 1908. Contrary to popular belief, preliminary designs for the trio were worked up by Matson, with contributions by naval architect Hugo P. Frear and marine engineer John F. Metten. And though based somewhat on the *Malolo*, her designer, William Francis Gibbs, had nothing to do with them.

Built at Bethlehem Shipbuilding's yards in Quincy, Massachusetts, the *Mariposa*, *Monterey*, and *Lurline* were practically identical, save for subtle differences in the color schemes of the public areas. These spaces were handled by Warren Wetmore and Co. of New York, the designers of Matson's Royal Hawaiian Hotel.

Like her sisters, the *Lurline* was 632 feet long, with a beam of 79 feet, and a 28-foot draft, weighing in at 18,500 gross tons. A crew of 359 served 437 passengers in First Class, 229 in Cabin.

During her sea trials, the *Lurline* bettered her sisters, making 22.75 knots with a maximum 30,000 shaft horsepower; her twin high-pressure turbines powered by 12 Babcock & Wilcox boilers. Her service speed would be 20.5 knots.

But before the *Lurline* settled into her Hawaiian schedule, there was, to quote the brochure, "The 'coronation tour' of a new ocean queen" in the form of a South Seas and Oriental Cruise, covering 25,000 miles. This



was the fifth such cruise; the first three were by the *Malolo*, the fourth served as the *Mariposa*'s maiden voyage.

Rates for standard cabins ranged from \$1,250 to \$3,400; suites and deluxe rooms from \$8,000 to \$14,200. (In today's dollars, this translates to \$28,700 to \$77,900, and \$183,400 to \$325,500, respectively.)

Sailing from New York on January 12, 1933, San Francisco on January 27, and Los Angeles the following day, the *Lurline* visited "more than twenty-five chief ports and cities in fourteen exotic lands," including Samoa, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, New Guinea, Singapore, Siam (now Thailand), The Philippines, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Hawaii, before returning to the mainland.

Shore excursions included visits to batik factories, primitive villages, and a variety of cathedrals, temples, shrines, and palaces. Often, entertainment was provided by native dancers.

On the evening of April 18, folks in Louisville, Kentucky could tune in on WHAS to hear the festivities surrounding the *Lurline*'s maiden voyage from Honolulu to the mainland. "Important" passengers would offer commentary, and native music was provided by the Royal Hawaiian Serenaders. (Not sure how diving for the coins tossed over the ship's side translated without images.)

The *Lurline* arrived in San Francisco on April 24; her Hawaiian service started on May 6. Later that month, Matson acknowledged the cruise's popularity by announcing a repeat for 1934.

Eight years later came World War II and service as a troopship, after which, a remarkable transformation into a thoroughly modern liner, a subject we'll discuss in our April issue, to celebrate the *Lurline*'s 75th anniversary of her *second* maiden voyage.

Matson's Lurline in Honolulu, with Pier 10 and the Aloha Tower on the left.

Native divers wait for passengers to toss coins over the railing.





Majestic Princess at anchor in the bay of Cabo San Lucas.

Cruising During COVID ... Aboard the *Majestic Princess*

story & images by Kevin M. Anthoney

(The following is an account of a cruise voyage that took place in February 2022.)

It's no secret that the cruise industry was hard hit during the global pandemic with cruise line fleets putting their ships in mothballs for at least a year or more. Many didn't know if the cruise industry would be able to bounce back after this unprecedented pandemic period that resulted in bringing cruise ships of the world to a complete halt in operations.

The famous rock formation entrance to the bay of Cabo San Lucas.



Like so many avid cruise enthusiasts, I too was hoping and praying that conditions in the world would begin to calm down, allowing passengers to once again step foot aboard their favorite cruise ship. In the latter part of 2021 restrictions covering the cruise industry slowly began to change—however, there were a lot of stipulations if passengers chose to hit the high seas. For example, ships could only sail at limited capacities (to ensure proper social distancing, as well as to allow the ships to block off a number of unoccupied staterooms in the event of a COVID-



Ruby Princess and Majestic Princess at anchor in the bay of Cabo San Lucas.

19 break-out, affected passengers could be immediately isolated from the rest of the ship's passengers and not having to cancel the cruise during mid-voyage), proof of vaccination and/or a negative COVID test result (test taken within 48 hours or less of the cruise departure), etc.

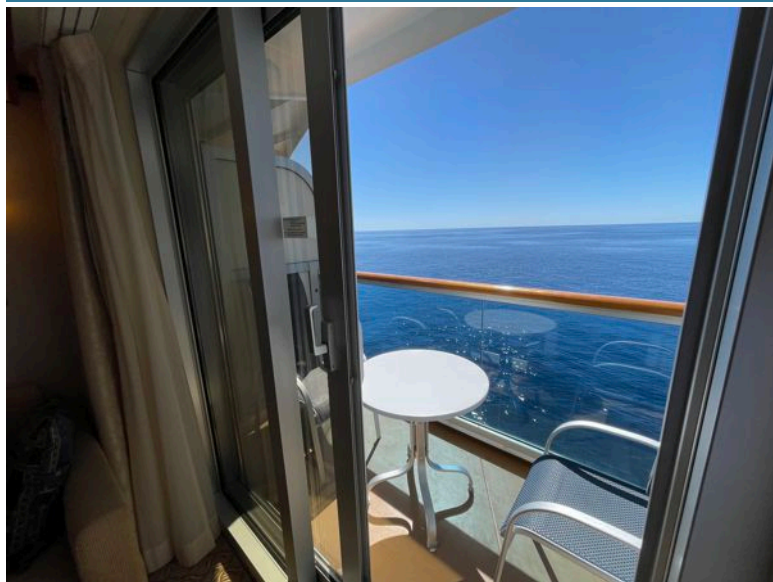
I love cruise ships, it's my hobby and my passion, but it is also my preferred mode of vacation. I had been land-locked way too long, and I just had to see for myself. Had things in the cruise industry finally come around for the better? I decided that a local departure from my home port of Los Angeles (so that I could avoid all the additional rules, regulations and lines at an airport) to somewhere and back within a week or less would be the perfect opportunity for my first cruise since the pandemic's loosening restrictions. I chose a safe bet, the typical "Love Boat" seven-day Mexican Riviera roundtrip from Los Angeles.

At the time, I was excited that Princess Cruises had assigned one of its *Royal-class* ships, *Majestic Princess*, for this itinerary. It should be noted that *Majestic Princess* was the very first ship in the Princess Cruises fleet to come out of the COVID lay-up in July 2021 and began cruises with a modified Alaska season before re-deploying down to Southern California for Pacific Coastal and Mexican Riviera itineraries.

My cruise departed on a Saturday, doing a 7-day roundtrip, visiting Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlan, and Puerto Vallarta.

I was looking forward to this cruise for many reasons, including the opportunity to try out Princess Cruises' entry into the electronic age with its Ocean Medallion. This half-dollar-sized disk, which can be worn in a wristband, or on a lanyard, replaces the traditional room card and works with the Princess Cruises application on your cell phone to allow you to personalize your cruise, make shore excursion and dining reservations, open your cabin door automatically as you approach, etc.

At the time of my cruise, the CDC protocols in place were such that, in addition to the vaccination/testing requirements noted above, passengers had to sign and acknowledge that masks were required onboard in all interior and enclosed areas—with the exception of eating or drinking. Also, social distancing practices would be in place, as well as hand-



Mini-suite balcony on the Majestic Princess.

washing and sanitizing gel dispenser stations that would be made available throughout the ship.

The *Majestic Princess* is a unique vessel within the 6-ship *Royal-class* fleet, in that she has features that cannot be found on any other ship with the class. The ship was built in 2017, and was the third delivered by Italy's Fincantieri shipyard, with a gross registered tonnage of just under 144,000. Her previous built fleet mates, *Royal Princess* and *Regal Princess*, came in at 142,000 tons, and the latest builds of *Enchanted Princess* and *Discovery Princess* at 145,000 tons. The fourth built *Sky Princess* is actually the largest in the fleet at 145,281 tons.

Another point that makes *Majestic Princess* stand out from the rest of her class is that she was built specifically for the Asian cruise market; initially deployed to serve the new, but fast-growing Chinese cruise passenger market. The interior design and layout as originally built, reflected unique venues and artwork specifically for the Chinese cruise passenger. In fact, the ship was christened July 9, 2017 in Shanghai, China by former NBA basketball player, Yao Ming and his wife, Ye Li.

For example, the ship, unlike any of her fleet mates, had a series of private karaoke rooms (called "Song on the Sea") located on the Starboard side, forward on Deck 5—which have been replaced by spa treatment rooms. Also on Deck 5, next to the central Piazza's International Café, you can spot a couple of wooden towers that look like card catalogs from a library. In the vessel's former life, these drawers held an impressive selection of teas from which passengers were able to choose. Although they still stand proud, they're now empty, and Princess Cruises currently has no plans to refill them. Probably the single most unique venue, that differentiates from all other vessels in the current fleet, is that of the Harmony Restaurant located on Deck 5, opposite the Guest

Mini-suite interior on the Majestic Princess.



Services area. The \$29-per-person Chinese restaurant originally offered items like jellyfish, abalone, and beef tenderloin. It has since been tweaked for North American palates and now includes items like gourmet crab rangoon, shrimp spring rolls, and General Tso's Chicken. I dined at this specialty restaurant on the first formal night of the cruise, and despite a noticeable presence of Asian passengers on my cruise, to my utter surprise, this venue was not crowded. The restaurant takes up precious

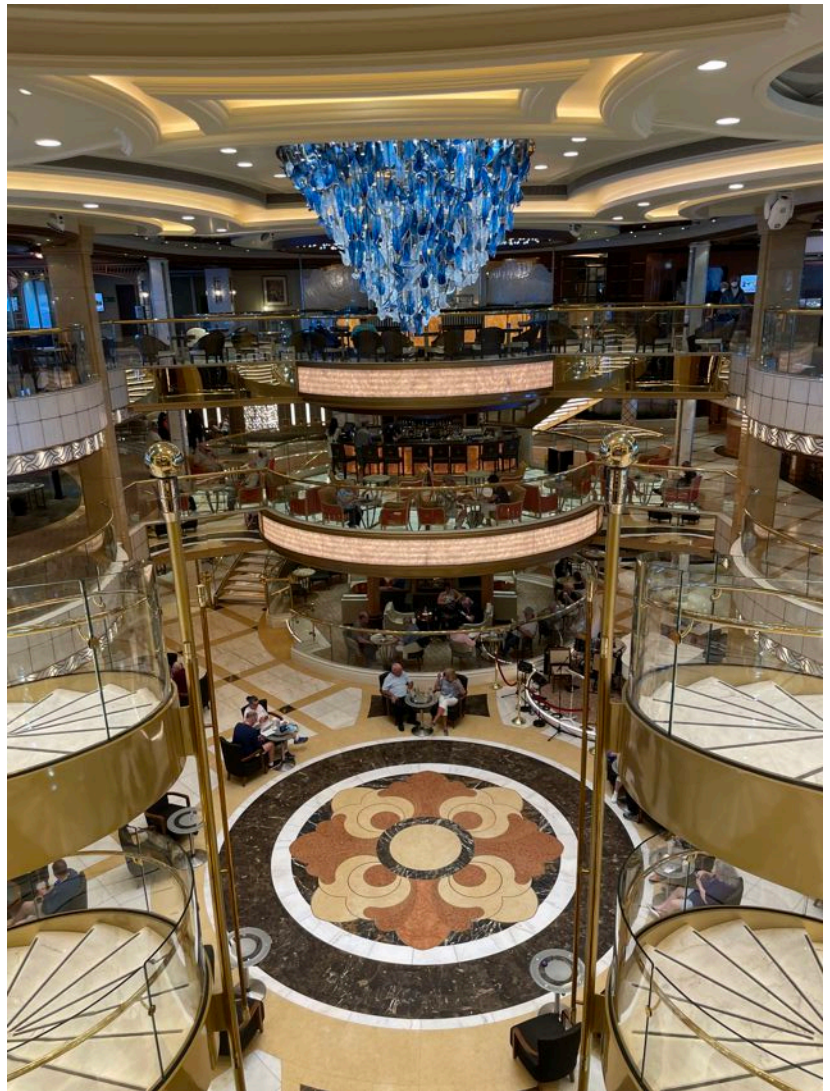
revenue space occupied by Sabatini's Italian Trattoria on other vessels in the fleet.

But fear not, you can get your Italian carb fix at Alfredo's Pizzeria, which serves up delicious complimentary hand-made pizza, select appetizers, salads, small portioned pastas, and desserts.

When *Majestic Princess* sailed in Chinese waters, it featured a Gong Cha Boba tea bar—since removed, with the space repurposed and renamed Princess Live!, in line with the other ships in the fleet. Another unique feature found only on *Majestic Princess* is on Deck 6, port side midship. Initially, when built the "VIP Gaming" area was designated for the Asian VIP's and high rollers frequenting the casino. Today it has been renamed the Double Down Bar and Baccarat Salon, offering a handful of private gaming tables, as well as comfortable seating, a bar, and a wall of TVs perfect for sports betting. Currently, this area is very underused, mainly as a bar and lounge area—hosting occasional private group cocktail parties. On the other five ships of this class, this same area is called Club 6 (on *Royal Princess* and *Regal Princess*) and serves as a lively night club with a DJ for late night dance moves; or called Take 5 (on *Sky Princess*, *Enchanted Princess*, and *Discovery Princess*) as a Jazz Club with a live trio or quartet.

Dining onboard offered a plethora of options. There are a total of three main dining rooms, one on Deck 5 (the Symphony) which was at the time of my cruise closed to passengers, and used exclusively for ship's staff, and two on Deck 6 (the mid-ship Concerto, and the aft-based Allegro). Dining rooms offered either a traditional assigned time (early or late) or the "Dine My Way" option where passengers can choose the day and time of their dinner reservation throughout the voyage (prior to their cruise, via the Princess app on their smart phone, or on the Princess Cruises webpage for booked passengers).

For something a little more casual and less structured, the *Majestic Princess* offered up on the Lido Deck 16 their World Fresh Marketplace (buffet-style), the Burgers & Lobster Grill, or the Chopsticks Noodle Bar (a unique food venue found only on *Majestic Princess*). For those wanting to sample some of the alternative dining choices that have a \$29 per person charge, there is the French-themed Bistro Sur La Mer, the previously mentioned Asian-style Harmony restaurant, and the Crown Grill (for its signature beef and seafood dishes). For those interested in experiencing a truly opulent dining experience, the ship offered the Wine



"The Piazza," the central atrium of the *Majestic Princess*.



Scenes from two of the shows onboard the Majestic Princess. At left, *Encore*; *Sweet Soul Music*, at right.

Maker's Dinner (at \$40 per person) and the Chef's Table Lumiere (at \$95 per person). I was extended an invitation from the Head Maitre d' of the Concerto Restaurant (where I normally dined for my meals throughout my voyage) to participate in the Wine Maker's Dinner on the final night of my cruise. I was honored to accept, and enjoyed four courses paired with two Silverado Vineyards (Napa) wines (a red and a white), followed by a dessert wine. Usually, this dinner is served in the Concerto Dining Room's "wine cellar," another semi-private dining area within the main dining room—however, my particular group of 12 fellow passengers had the distinction of being escorted to the aft Allegro Dining Room, where we dined at the very private and exclusive Chef's Table Lumiere designated area. Most enjoyable.

Tequila Factory shore excursion in Puerto Vallarta.



As for health protocols that were in existence at the time of my cruise, N95-type masks were mandatory at all indoor areas of the ship, which included the various show lounges, theater, casino, etc., except while actively eating or drinking. One particular protocol I will never forget, was that every time I entered the buffet restaurant. I had to wash my hands with soap and warm water—which was supervised and watched by a uniformed crew member. Also, once inside the buffet area stations, only the passengers were allowed to select a tray and an empty plate. Staff members with masks and gloves, used serving tongs to give you your rolled up linen napkin with accompanying utensils. Crew members behind the serving areas would handle the food items and place the selected portions onto your plate. I must say that given the circumstances at the time, I felt very comfortable and confident that the proper health protocols were being practiced, and at no time did I have concerns about contracting COVID while onboard.

There were many entertainment options to choose from. Princess Cruises presents some very expensive and lavish production shows throughout their fleet, and during my voyage, I had two great shows to enjoy in the Princess Theater: *Encore*, and *Sweet Soul Music*. Other offerings included a very talented magician who also was a great singer and comedian. It should be noted that a typical 7-day cruise would normally have a minimum of three and sometimes four production

shows—however I was informed that due to logistics of training and transporting each new production show team to the various ships in the fleet that were slowly coming back on line and returning to cruise service, that it would take the remainder of the 2022 year to properly staff all ships in the fleet with the proper production show staff.

Another interesting piece of information I learned while attending a public “behind the scenes” of the Production Shows that took place on one of the sea days back to Los Angeles in the Princess Live! Venue, was that the singers and dancers had to carefully orchestrate their moves on stage in compliance with health protocols. All of the production show members, which numbered more than a dozen, all wore black masks on stage. The only exceptions were those members who sang, who would appear on stage (after a calculated costume change) without wearing a mask. However, when show’s members were singing in close proximity onstage, they kept six feet apart in order to abide by the health protocols that were in place at the time.

Among the daytime activities offered to passengers during at sea days, was a virtual tour of the bridge, by means of two Navigation Officers from the Bridge, and a very detailed and photo intensive PowerPoint presentation. Live tours were not offered for health and security reasons.

At the time of my cruise, going ashore was limited to wearing masks and participating in ship organized tours and excursions. I participated in a shore excursion in each of the three ports our ship visited, and felt very secure and safe. Everyone on my shore excursions complied and wore masks at all times on the buses and inside buildings. Princess Cruises offered over a dozen choices of shore tours in each port—so there was something just about anyone could choose in order to enjoy their day in exploring the various Mexican destinations on our cruise itinerary.

Overall, it was a very enjoyable and smooth sailing. At full capacity, the *Majestic Princess* can accommodate between 3,600-3,800 passengers, but on my particular cruise we sailed at a capacity of only 1,300 passengers. Lastly, I am happy to report that during my specific sailing, we had no passengers get sick nor come down with any COVID-related symptoms that would have required any kind of quarantine. I look forward to hitting the high seas once again in the not-too-distant future.

(Editor’s note ... Amenities and surcharges are subject to change.)

The Majestic Princess in Puerto Vallarta.





I got an urge to binge watch some ship videos, but not the short videos I usually share. This is the time for some full-length documentaries, the kind that help a lazy Sunday afternoon to pass in comfort.

So, mark your calendar for next Sunday and block off the whole afternoon, grab a snack, fluff the pillows on the sofa, and lay back for some gross registered tonnage in the comfort of your home.

It's sail away time!



The Great Ships: The Ocean Liners

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAKKM3m_7i0



Last Days of The Liners

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftv_B2t1yBc



Floating Palaces (in 4 parts)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T93IFBCzg0M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0OrxX09bIk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvtAbFaXQ5k>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x96jB57bJrM&t=16s>

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for more information:
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jimpinxit@gmail.com



A Look Back at the *Queen Elizabeth*

Once one of "The World's Wonder Ships," in January 1973, workmen scaled the gutted wreck of the *Seawise University*, better known as the *Queen Elizabeth*. The victim of a devastating fire the previous year, she rested, partially collapsed, on her starboard side in Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour until salvage finally began in late 1974.

Her last Atlantic crossing with Cunard took place in November 1968, after 22 years of commercial service. (And after a "Hail Mary" refit which added a pool and lido area to make her more palatable for cruising.) Sold to become a tourist attraction in Port Everglades, Florida, the venture failed in less than two years. Sold again to Chinese tycoon C. Y. Tung, \$5,000,000 was spent to transform her into a floating university. Those plans went up in smoke in January 1972.

We all know some aspect of her history. Perhaps you had a relative as one of the over 800,000 soldiers she carried to the various fronts during World War II. Maybe as a child, you took an overseas vacation during those glorious postwar years. Or you checked in on her during her brief stint as a tourist attraction in Florida. However you remember her, enjoy these photos from the career of Cunard's mighty *Queen Elizabeth*.



March 1939. The 1,031-foot long, and soon to be 83,673 gross ton, Queen Elizabeth is at her fitting out pier at John Brown's Clydebank yard in Scotland.



March 1940. What a difference a year makes. With World War II well under way, it was decided to send the world's largest liner on a covert crossing to the United States. Preparations were made to move the liner to Southampton, but it was a ruse to fool the Germans.

After zigzagging across the Atlantic, the Queen Elizabeth joined her fleetmate, the Queen Mary, and French rival the Normandie. In November 1940, the Elizabeth sailed for Singapore for conversion into a troopship, a role she'd have until 1946.





(left) On July 5, 1961, the Queen Elizabeth joined a crowded port alongside the Independence, America, United States, Olympia, USS Intrepid, Mauretania, and Sylvania.

(below) Part of the brochure for "the Elizabeth," an ill-fated Florida venture that hoped to replicate the Queen Mary experience at Long Beach.

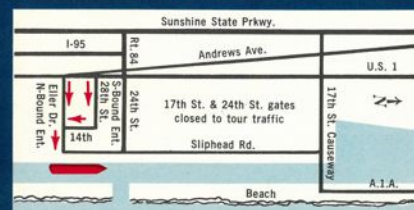
Statistically speaking,
the ELIZABETH
is a collection of superlatives.

STEAMED	3,472,672 Miles
WARTIME PASSENGERS	811,324
PEACETIME PASSENGERS	1,500,000
LENGTH	1031 Feet, Length on Waterline 1004 Ft.
HEIGHT	234 Feet, Keel to Masthead
BREADTH	118 Feet
SERVICE SPEED	28½ Knots
POWER	160,000 Shaft H.P.
MACHINERY	Single Reduction Geared Turbines
PROPELLERS	4
BOILERS	12
PASSENGER CAPACITY	815 First, 660 Cabin, 755 Tourist
OFFICERS AND CREW	1200
GROSS TONNAGE	82,997
CARGO SPACE	60,760 Cubic Feet
DECKS	12
PROMENADE DECK	724 Feet
DRAUGHT	39 Feet, 6½ Inches
ANCHORS	4—Each Weighing 16 Tons
ANCHOR CHAIN CABLE	990 Feet; Weight, 300 Tons
RIVETS IN HULL	Over 10,000,000
WATER-TIGHT COMPARTMENTS	131
ELEVATORS	28
PORTHOLES AND WINDOWS	2000
WIDTH OF FUNNEL	Fore and Aft—44 Feet Side to Side—29 Feet
WHISTLES	3—Weighing One Ton, Audible for 10 Miles
PUBLIC ROOMS	37 (Including 338-Seat Cinema Theatre, Three Swimming Pools and Three Libraries)

There are 700 electric clocks, 680 telephones, 30,000 lamps, 4,000 miles of wiring, and two power stations, producing a total power of 8,800 kilowatts.

If you could stand the Queen Elizabeth on end, she would be taller than the Eiffel Tower, and nearly as tall as the 1,046-foot Chrysler Building in New York.

Visit one of America's foremost visitor attractions. Easy access to Port Everglades midway between Hollywood and Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Take Exit 3 from the Florida State Turnpike or Route 84 from Interstate 95. Then follow the signs to Port Everglades.



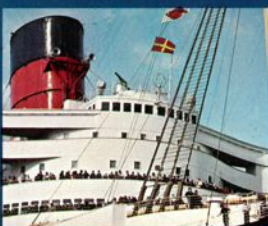
The Elizabeth (Cunard) Corporation
P.O. 13106, Port Everglades, Florida 33316

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COME ABOARD
the ELIZABETH
QUEEN OF THE SEAS



The largest
ocean liner
the world
has ever seen



Come . . .
cruise into the
luxuries of yesteryear
limited only by the
seas of your imagination.



A lone little boat struggles to address the oil slick emanating from the burned hulk of the former Queen Elizabeth.

in our wake

Congratulations go to two Chapter members for articles published in the Fall 2022 issue of *PowerShips*.

Member Don Persson gives an emotional, firsthand account of his adventure as one of the crew aboard the self-propelled lifeboat that rescued American Merchant Seaman

Robert Lee Hudson, who was hanging on a rope ladder on the stern of the *Andrea Doria* in rough seas in *The Rescue of the Last Passenger from the Sinking Andrea Doria*.

Member Bill Miller continues his Lives of the Liners series with Part II of the story of Alex Jamison, and his time with the veteran ship *Canberra*, right up to the ship's last days. Miller also offers a touching account of the final days of the educational cruise ship *Uganda*.

