September 2015

The Millergram is designed and formatted by Tim Noble, our good friend from Melbourne, Australia and a former navigating officer with the Blue Star Line.

AIDA CRUISES: It has been a long list of delays and now the 124,500-grt Aidaprima, being built by Mitsubishi in Japan, is delayed by another six months. The 3,300-passenger ship was to enter service in October with what might have been the longest maiden voyage in history – a 50-day cruise from Japan to Europe, to Hamburg.

BOOKS: Ships Monthly, the excellent monthly shipping magazine out of the UK, has come out with three magazine-style commemorative editions in a series called Ships Illustrated. There’s P&O Before the Cruise Ships, Queen Mary: Britain’s Finest Ocean Liner and Classic Ships: Fine Ship Photography from a Bygone Era. We like them very much – each having a great collection of photographs. In fact, they’re excellent even just for browsing the wonderful photos, many of which are unpublished.
And speaking of P&O, which after 1960 became P&O-Orient Lines and included all the Orient Line passenger ships. The innovative Oriana, commissioned in 1960, was the fastest liner ever on the UK-Australia run. A superb and very popular liner, the 41,000-ton, 2,200-passenger liner had a rather sordid ending, however. The Oriana was retired from P&O service in the spring of 1986 and was sold to Japanese buyers, who had the liner towed to Beppu on Kyushu Island for use as a hotel, entertainment centre and museum. Less than successful, she was sold to Chinese buyers in 1995 and towed to Qinhuandao and then, in 1998, to Shanghai. She changed locations once more, in 2000, when she was shifted to Dalian. Finally, she seemed successful, but then, in June 2004, was ripped from her moorings and capsized during a huge storm. Refloated a year later, she was not worthy of repairs and was towed away (shown above) to Zhangiagang to be scrapped.
Crammed with ships: The port of Genoa in the 1920s. If you like great Italian passenger ships and there were many, don’t forget to look into ItalianLiners.com. Superb material & history coupled with great photo material!

Our good friend Dr Nico Guns reports that his highly detailed history of the beloved *Nieuw Amsterdam* (1938-74) will be published in a three-book boxed set.

**CARGO SHIPS:** While older, less efficient container ships, even those built in the 1990s, are being sent off to shipbreakers (mostly in India), there is a record number of new, highly efficient new builds coming on line, many carrying 20,000+ containers. Maersk Line, the biggest container ship operator of all, has just ordered 9 more containerships. This is in the wake of building some 20 194,000-ton ships that each carry some 18,500 containers. Everyone is caught up, it seems, in big ship fever. COSCO, China Ocean Shipping Co, has also ordered 9 giant ships. France’s CMA CGM – with 460 ships in its fleet -- has just commissioned its 18,000-container capacity *Georg Foster*. 
**CRUISE & MARITIME VOYAGES:** Curiously interesting of the actual owners of cruise ships. The 46,052-ton *Magellan* operated by UK-based Cruise & Maritime – built in 1985 and the former *Holiday* on Carnival – transferred last year from Portuguese owners (Celebration Sociedade Unipressoal Lda to Bahamas-registered owners (Epic Cruise Ltd).

**CUNARD:** The final days of a *Queen Mary 2* crossing earlier this summer concluding Cunard's outstanding 175th celebrations. Few companies could have created better celebratory events. I was aboard the QM2 and happily witnessed most of the events.

At the podium! On Friday, July 10th, we are arrived at Halifax. I’m the emcee for the *Cunard 175 Halifax* events. Halifax was of course the home of Samuel Cunard and much of the early Cunard family. It is all planned minute to minute: speakers, images on a screen and of course formal presentations. The speakers include the president of Cunard North America, our Captain, Robert Lloyd and of course John Langley, "Mr Cunard" in Nova Scotia and of course author of *Steam Lion*, the biography of Samuel Cunard. The highlight of the occasion: the naming of a waterfront public space as Samuel Cunard Quay. Happily, it all goes off without a hitch – another splendid tribute to Cunard!

Under the stars: We sail just after 8 in a special departure, going counter-clockwise around the bay and joining a convoy of ships including the *Theodore the Tugboat*, a second tugboat, the *Atlantic Oak*, and a warship, *HMCS Montreal*. An added touch as we depart: a 21 gun salute from ashore and then an escort of yachts and other pleasure craft from the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron as we head to sea.

**On Sunday, July 12th Boston:** More celebrations! Cunard opened its very first office in North America here in Boston. That was just about 175 years ago, following the first passage of the little Britannia. The last Cunard Building here, its name still...
carved in stone over the entrance, was sold off in the 1960s. These days, while it has been lavishly and lovingly restyled for apartments, it is the perfect venue for yet another 175 celebration. We troop off by 10 and the festivities begin at 11. Again playing emcee, introductions for the president of Cunard North America, the captain, the president of the harbor authority and the owner of the Cunard Building. The fifth floor space could not have been more fitting – restyled in high contemporary, a sort of conference center moderne, it decorated in tribute to Cunard: nautical lamps, vintage Cunard posters and, as a sort of board table center piece, a glass-cased model of the luxurious Caronia, the famed Green Goddess of the 1950s & '60s cruising. And there's more: A large walled-in area has been shaped, in wine-colored wood, to resemble the aft end of an upper deck aboard the original Queen Mary. It is in the shape of the famed Verandah Grill Restaurant aboard the famed Cunarder. The speeches went well, gifts and plaques were exchanged, praises and congratulations, and then a chatty reception with delicious nibbles (including manageable slices of Boston Cream Pie) followed. Noticeably tall and looking like army sentries, a small army of red-suited bell men were in attendance as well.

We sail at 8 o'clock & then fireworks in the harbor – another anniversary salute! The fireworks were in fact spectacular, great and grand splashes of colors and especially the orange-red that symbolizes Cunard. The QM2 is undocked, but instead of sailing off, she carefully moves astern, in reverse, to a position in the inner harbor, in fact quite close to the downtown waterfront. The stern decks were crammed as we watched, cheered and applauded as the nighttime summer skies were ablaze. The sparkling big liner and the Boston skyline coupled with the soaring fireworks must have made an extraordinary sight.
**Mon Jul 13th at sea:** My final talk at 10 (timely and all about New York harbor) and then all the speakers assembled for a sort of gala Q&A in the Royal Court Theatre at 11. And then a final book signing & otherwise quiet afternoon, concluding this 32-day trip for me. On this last leg, Cunard has done an absolutely magnificent – and special thanks to Michael Gallagher, the Company historian – for the exacting details. From that stunning ceremony in Liverpool cathedral to the receptions in Halifax and Boston to the fireworks in Boston (and later in New York harbor), no company could have had a better or well deserved 175th. It has a privilege, an honor and an absolute great treat to be aboard.

**Tue Jul 14th New York/Brooklyn/Secaucus:** We pass under the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge at 6am and with a special welcome of small, harbor craft. Later ashore, farewell to the *Queen Mary 2* and finally back home.

That evening, in Battery Park in Lower Manhattan, hosted a sort of final birthday party. The huge Queen Mary 2 was moored off the sea wall and, as we watched and like candles on the great Cunard cake, was the setting for a gala light and lazer display. The 1132-ft long liner sparkled. Cheers, sighs, cameras clicking and then loud applause! It was a fitting end to Cunard’s 175th.

**EGYPT:** President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi formally opened the new Suez Canal expansion on August 7th, allowing two-way traffic for the first time via a 75 km parallel channel that will reduce transit times by up to seven hours. Two big containerships, CMA CGM’s 11,400-teu *CMA CGM Titan* and Mediterranean Shipping Co's 13,000-teu *MSC Capella*, headed the processions in each direction. In a speech at the official opening ceremony,
President Sisi said the work had been carried out in Egypt "in extreme circumstances, in hard times". It had been critical that the canal was completed on schedule, he added. "The new canal is not only an engineering feat, but it was the first step in a further thousand steps to develop Egypt," said President Sisi. "We promised the canal as a gift to the world and have fulfilled this in record time, providing an artery for additional trade."

But questions remain over the $4 billion cost of the project and the Suez Canal Authority's projections for revenues from the canal. Last year the SCA earned $5 billion from transit fees but it expects this to rise to $13bn by 2023.

**ITALY:** I am preparing a book on passenger ship interiors, due for 2017. What an array of sea-going luxury, style and comfort. Among the ships to be included will be splendid Italian liners of the 1950s and '60s. With very contemporary and often very beautiful interiors, those lounges and staterooms and even the vast lido decks, ships such as the *Augustus, Andrea Doria, Leonardo da Vinci* (a superb brochure cover shown below) and *Michelangelo* will be included. It was a great and grand era of ocean liner design and decoration.

**LINDBLAD:** Expansion! This expedition-style company is ordering three new specialized cruise ships.

**NEW YORK CITY:** I like skyscrapers, well almost as much as ocean liners. I watch them often from the decks of arriving or departing cruise ships. But lately, I can't seem to catch up. There's a building boom of unprecedented proportions, for example, here in
New York City. Dozens of construction cranes, so it seems, can be seen from one end of the City skyline to the other. (One sad aspect, however – the older, narrower, often shorter older buildings from the Twenties and Thirties are disappearing. The classic, 60-story Woolworth Building Lower Manhattan is now at but hidden by a 78-floor apartment & hotel tower on Greenwich Street.) There’s the Nordstrom Tower, soon to be built on West 57th Street and when topped-out will be just 12 inches shorter than 1,776 feet of the World Trade Center. Then there’s a 95-story tower being planned but for across the Hudson, in booming downtown Jersey City. And now comes word of plans for a 1,200-ft tall apartment tower in downtown Brooklyn. And this "construction fever" has spread overseas – the Saudi Arabians are constructing a tower, in a suburb of Mecca, that will surpass Dubai’s 162-story, 2,700-ft tall Burj Khalifa. The Arabian tower will have 220 floors and soar to 3,200 feet. And there might be bigger towers to come. The American designer of the Saudi tower is already planning a building of 5,280 feet – one mile high!

OCEAN LINER COLLECTIBLES: She was the greatest Italian liner of the 1930s, Mussolini’s "dreamboat". The 51,000-ton Rex, completed in September 1932, sailed the express run between Naples, Genoa, Villefranche, Gibraltar and then across to New York. The 879-ft long liner had an added mystique – she was the world’s fastest ship, the Blue Riband champion for two years (seen below), between 1933 and 1935. Sadly, she saw only eight years of service before Italy entered World War II in June 1940 and the 2,358-passenger liner laid-up, supposedly for safekeeping and away from the war. She was moored in a lagoon on the upper Adriatic coast. Her end came four years later, in September 1944, when moored near Trieste. Few contents, including the luxurious fittings, survived the war. They are, in fact, something of a mystery. Capsized, the giant liner lay on its side until salvage and scrapping began in the late '40s. Lying at Capodistria and what had become post-war Yugoslavian territory, the demolition work
was sluggish and not completed until 1958. In the summer of 2012, during my own
cruise visit to July 2012 (onboard P&O's Adonia), several cafes, tavernas and small shops
displayed framed photos of the great Rex. An inkwell and stand from the ship recently
surfaced and sold for $200.

The late Der Scutt was a great and longtime friend. The Trump Tower designer, Der was
a voracious ocean liner collector. Boston Harbor Auctions has procured a towering
collection of ocean liner memorabilia and amassed by the architect and designer of many
important New York buildings, most notably 5th Avenue's Trump Tower. Der was also
the former president of the Ocean Liner Museum in New York.

All of the great and grand liners seem to be included in this part of Der's collection (an
earlier part went to Lower Manhattan's South Street Seaport Museum). All the great ship
names are there: “Largest Ship in the World!”, “Fastest Ship Ever Built!”, “Most
Luxurious Ship!”, “The Unsinkable!”

Exquisite depictions of the ocean liner era are embodied in Bassett-Lowke, Wagner,
Boucher & John Lindsay ship models. There will also be printed matter: brochures,
books, posters and more. In addition to the ocean liner collection of models, several
architectural models of Der Scutt's will be auctioned including a stunning model of
Trump Tower; the model stood proudly in Der Scutts offices since the tower was built.

The Der Scutt Collection was a grand compilation and near-complete illustration of a
great number concerning the most important ocean liners to cross the Atlantic and the
cruise lines that introduced them to the World.
The auction will be held in Boston on September 26th & 27th.

Contact: Boston Harbor Auctions (617) 451-2650.

**OCEAN LINER HISTORY**: The Haifa-based Zim Lines started passenger operations in the late 1940s with mostly smaller, second hand tonnage. The Company jumped forward in 1953 with the 11,000-ton Argentina of the Home Lines, but which dated back to 1913 when she was first commissioned as the Norwegian Bergensfjord. Through a West German reparations account, however, new tonnage arrived by the mid Fifties – the 9,800-ton combo liners Israel and Zion for Haifa-Mediterranean-New York service and, a tad larger, the 9,900-ton sisters Jerusalem and Theodor Herzl for inter-Mediterranean service, mostly between Marseilles, Genoa, Naples and Haifa. While Zim built the far larger, 25,500-ton, 930-passenger Shalom in 1964, airline competition as well as expensive Israeli labor spelled a quick end. By the late '60s, Zim was all but out of the passenger ship business.
PRINCESS: The third of the Royal class of 145,000 tonners will be based in Shanghai for the growing Chinese market. Special onboard features will be a World Leader dinner, traditional English afternoon tea, a lobster grill, room service balcony dining and a hot pot dinner option.

ROYAL CARIBBEAN: The Dynamic Dining concept aboard the likes of the giant, 6,400-passenger *Oasis of the Seas* & *Allure of the Seas* just didn't work – and so it has been dropped.
PHOTO SALON

Liners at Le Havre by Philippe Brebant

Clockwise from top:

Saga Pearl II
Bremen - 5 June 2006

Black Watch - 3 May 2010

Aida Blu - 22 March 2010

Spirit of Adventure - 10 June 2007
HEARD ALONG THE BOAT DECK:

IT ALL STARTED IN BARBADOS

Great two-funnel liners, the *Mauretania* and *Nieuw Amsterdam* were my absolute favorites. I loved seeing them. Big liners like the *Mauretania* had great presence. They'd visit in winter, on cruises from New York," so recalled Roger Emtage, when remembering his youth on the Caribbean island of Barbados. From his youngest days, he had a great interest in ships and especially in passenger ships. His mother used to commute to and from Canada on Canadian National's famous "Lady boats" – small, 100-passenger ships with names such as *Lady Nelson* and *Lady Rodney*. Roger himself began by collecting post cards of the liners. He spent hours watching ships come and go from the quayside in Bridgetown – the Fyffes Line "banana boats" from England, the Booth Line ships going to or from Liverpool and Brazilian ports, the *Antilles*, *Flandre* and *Colombie* of the French Line, the little passenger ships of Holland's Royal Netherlands Steamship Company and others like the Spanish Line, Siosa Lines, Lauro Lines and Costa Line.

"At home, my parents, family and friends would sit around, drink rum and talk about people and ships," added Roger. "The ships themselves were like friends. They'd mention someone who was arriving on the *Golfito* or the *Antilles* or the *Oranje Nassau*." Inevitably, Roger went to sea and, in 1968, joined Britain's Fyffes Line, Elders & Fyffes Limited to be exact, which ran a fleet of white-hulled "banana boats" that traded between the UK and the West Indies. "Fyffes ships were household names in Barbados
back then," he remembered. One of their ships arrived every Thursday morning at 7. Alternately every other week were the Fyffes passenger ships, the Camito and Golfito, which carried 100 passengers each. They would each be on four-week roundtrip voyages from Southampton to Trinidad, Barbados and then up to Jamaica and Bermuda before returning to the UK. Roger remembers them: "They had lovely decor – not opulent but comfy. They were all wood and drapes. There was a lounge and bar – with dancing in the lounge. There was also a small writing room, a small pool on deck and a wrap-around promenade deck. Both ships were especially popular in winter with 'snow birds' coming from England. Other winter visitors came to Barbados on ships such as the Caronia, Andes and Stella Polaris. They'd return to England in spring. Princess Alice would be aboard the Camito or Golfito once a year. She was chancellor of the University of the West Indies, which had three campuses (Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica). She'd hop on and off, and visit the different campuses."

Roger did a stint with another British shipping firm, the Harrison Line, which also traded between the UK and the West Indies, before joining the famed P&O-Orient Lines.
POST-WAR ON THE LINERS from Fonthill Media, Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK, due Summer 2015.


EAST OF SUEZ: LINERS TO AUSTRALIA IN THE 1950s & '60s co-authored with Tim Noble; from Amberley Publishing Co, Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK, published Winter 2014.
GREAT FRENCH PASSENGER LINERS from The History Press, Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK, published September 2014.


**GREAT BRITISH PASSENGER SHIPS** by The History Press Ltd, Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK, published 2010.


