

# Black Jack

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH  
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY  
[www.sotonwss.org.uk](http://www.sotonwss.org.uk)



Issue No: 195

Summer 2020



May saw the 40th Anniversary of the maiden arrival of **Norway** (ex-France) at Southampton on 7th May 1980 following her conversion to what was the World's largest cruise ship at the time. Here she is seen turning into the Ocean Dock and about to berth at the Ocean Terminal then at 43-4 berths - another anniversary in July is of 70 years since that terminal was officially opened – see our feature article in this issue. The Red Funnel fire-fighting tug **Gatcombe** was providing the traditional welcome with her water jets – she went on to become **Multratug 6** working for Multratug in Terneuzen and has recently been broken up at Ghent.

photo Nigel Robinson

## Black Jack – Summer 2020 No.195

### Editorial team

Nigel Robinson, Michael Page & Andrew McAlpine.  
Website – Neil Richardson

**Black Jack is the quarterly magazine of the Southampton Branch of the World Ship Society.**

## Branch Meetings

### Venue:

**St James Road Methodist Church**

St James Road  
Shirley

Southampton, SO15 5HE

All meetings commence at 19.30 and the meeting room is to be vacated by 21.30. Meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month.

### Honorary Branch Secretary

**David Oldham**

2 Ferndale Road, Marchwood  
Southampton, SO40 4XY

email: [d.oldham@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:d.oldham@hotmail.co.uk)

### Chairman

**Neil Richardson**

109 Stubbington Lane  
Stubbington

Fareham, Hants

PO14 2PB

01329 663450

### Treasurer

**Andrew Hogg**

“Debanker”

Lyburn Road

Hamptworth

Salisbury

SP5 2DP

01794 390502

### Visits Organiser

**Adrian Tennet**

34 New Road

Fair Oak

SO50 8EN

023 8060 0197

Full details of all committee members can be found on the Southampton WSS website at

[www.sotonwss.org.uk](http://www.sotonwss.org.uk)

### Editorial contact:

Nigel Robinson

2 Glencarron Way

Bassett

Southampton

SO16 7EF

023 8079 0876

email: [gillrobinson@freenetname.co.uk](mailto:gillrobinson@freenetname.co.uk)

or [nigelvrobinson@gmail.com](mailto:nigelvrobinson@gmail.com)

## 2020 Branch Meeting Programme

June 9th

**Ten Days on the Bosphorus**

David Hornsby

July 14th

**Members Mini-Talks**

Colin Drayson & Richard Jolliffe

August 11th

**London Docks in the 1970s**

Ian Wells

September 8th

**British India Line part 2**

Trevor Cox

October 13th

**WSS AGM 2020 Rendsburg**

Phil Simons

November 10th

**Southampton Branch AGM & Digital**

**Photo Competition**

December 8th

**John Havers Tribute**

Neil Richardson

---

***The Southampton Branch Annual Cruise due to take place on Saturday June 20th has been cancelled.***

---

***You will see that I have left the future branch programme in, but it remains to be seen when we may be able to resume meetings. Also it should be noted that our meeting venue at present remains shut due to the coronavirus lock-down. We will of course keep everyone informed should the situation change.***

---

---

All contributions to *BJ*, by post, email, memory stick or CD are most welcome. Any article with a connection to The Solent area would be much appreciated. The Editor could reproduce magazine or newspaper articles but preference is given to articles ‘by the branch – for the branch’.

**Would members please ensure that any changes to their postal and/or email addresses are notified to the Branch as soon as possible.**

# Andrew's Note Book

Some new or infrequent callers to Southampton Docks by Andrew McAlpine

Welcome to the latest notebook from the port of Southampton, here are some updates on the comings and goings and other news from around the port.

The last few months have been dominated by the coronavirus pandemic. Its effect on the shipping industry is likely to be long term. The cruise industry has been hardest hit with the vast majority of the world's cruise fleet now laid up or at anchor in various ports around the world. Southampton is playing a pivotal role in helping the cruise industry, and the last three months have seen up to 7 ships in port at once, together with calls from a number of new visitors.

The first most notable visitor was Royal Caribbean's **Allure of the Seas**, which arrived for the first time on 20<sup>th</sup> March. She was due for a routine visit to dry dock in Cadiz to undergo her "Amplification" but due to the shipyard being closed she was diverted to Southampton, she visited a number of times throughout March and April before finally sailing for Gibraltar 9th May.



**Allure of the Seas** built 2010, 220,000GRT sailing 9th May



**Marella Celebration** built 1984 33,933GRT seen sailing 22nd April

The port has also been a temporary home to five ships from the Marella Cruise's fleet and has seen regular calls from **Marella Discovery, Discovery 2, Marella Explorer, Explorer 2** and **Marella Celebration**, which have been making regular trips to and from the nab anchorage. (**Marella Celebration** built as **Noordam**) is reported up for sale – Ed)

Another notable visitor was **Carnival Breeze** that has sailed from Port Canaveral to repatriate crew and arrived on 16<sup>th</sup> May. She was the first Carnival cruise line vessel to visit since Fascination in 1994.



**Carnival Breeze** built 2011 128,052GRT seen sailing for Cadiz 17th May.

Other notable visitors have been **Regal Princess, Norwegian Star, Silver Cloud, and Silver Spirit**.

We have also seen a number of new container ships visiting due to recent changes in the Alliance services. The new callers were **YM Wonderland** 16th May, **ONE Apus** 12th May and **ONE Stork** 19th May.

Due to the impact of the Coronavirus the following few months will see a number of blanked sailings for a number of container lines. The Alliance comprising of Hapag-Lloyd, ONE, Yang Ming and from April Hyundai (now rebranded as HMM) have created a new loop FE2 after merging two services. Due to this we are now set to receive calls from a three of HMM's 24,000TEU class. **HMM Oslo** 25<sup>th</sup> June, **HMM Copenhagen** 2<sup>nd</sup> July, **HMM Dublin** 23<sup>rd</sup> July.



**YM Wonderland** built 2019 151,451GRT seen 16th May

until next time stay safe and happy  
ship spotting  
Andrew

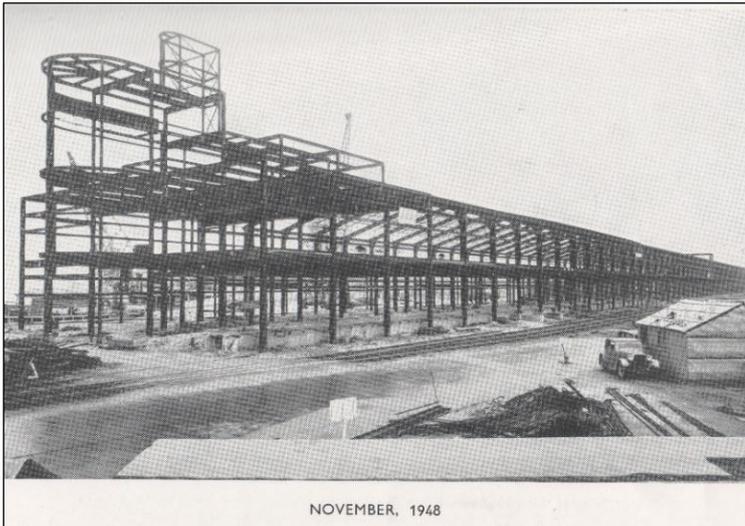
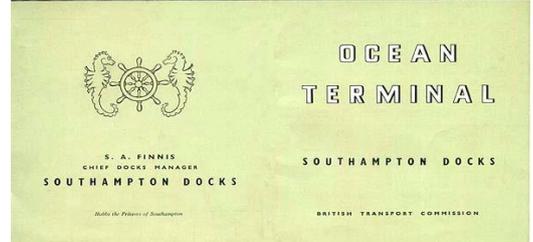
all photos by Andrew McAlpine

# IN THE PORT 70 YEARS AGO

## OPENING OF THE OCEAN TERMINAL AT 43/4 BERTH SOUTHAMPTON

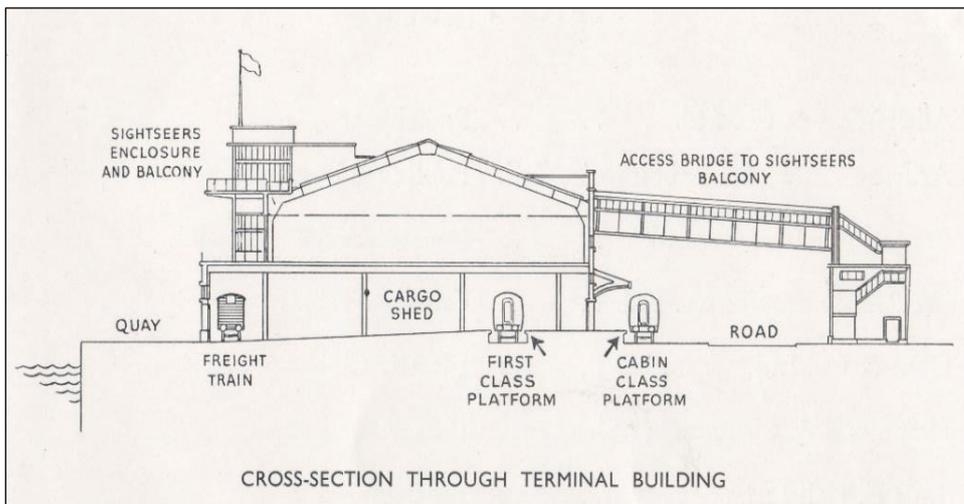
On Monday 31<sup>st</sup> July 1950, shortly before our Branch was formed, the then Prime Minister Clement Attlee officially opened this revolutionary new landmark building.

The Terminal was first conceived prior to World War II, in the Art-Deco style, with a streamlined modern turret at the southern end. After the War, in May 1946, an inspection group headed by Sir Eustace Missenden (General Manager of Southern Railway) and R.P. Biddle (Docks and Marine Manager) met in the bomb-damaged remains of the former 1911-built Cunard White Star sheds to examine the plans for the new Terminal. The plan for the construction of "a Terminal unsurpassed throughout the World" was approved by Southern Railway Board without hesitation and after endorsement by the Minister of Transport and approval by the Fine Arts Commission, preparation work commenced.



The two old damaged sheds were removed, 628 piles were driven between 35ft and 70 ft down to support the 1,297ft (395m) long and 121ft (36.9m) wide new building. By the end of 1948, the 2,750 ton steel frame was complete, (see left), ready for installation of the pre-cast concrete cladding, 4 acres of roofing and 1½ acres of glazing. The main section had a roof ridge height of 53½ft (16.3m), the semi-circular southern tower rising to 79½ft (24.2m) surmounted by a flag tower 102ft (31.1m) high and an enclosed capacity of 6¼ million cubic feet. The building was lit by 710 fluorescent lights, 12,500 ft of fluorescent tubing and 850 electric lights.

Whilst the former 1911 sheds were single storey, the imposing new building was two storey design. The ground floor included a freight rail line nearest the quay, staff offices, a cargo area with three 28ft x 40ft secure bonded cages and a 1000ft island train 30ft wide platform for first-class, whilst outside the building on the road-side was another platform for cabin-class trains, as, at this time, the 'Queens' required five boat trains to/from Waterloo.



Passenger links from the upper floor to ships was achieved by three pairs of light alloy telescopic and slewing gangways, the first of their kind, mounted on twin traversing turrets. A pair weighed 17½ tons, contained 12,500 bolts and 100,000 rivets. Each individual gangway could be elevated or depressed 20 deg to automatically adjust for tidal changes, as well as moving along the building allowing positioning for individual ships and also to avoid obstructing quayside cranes, which were used for discharging baggage from the ship's holds to the upper level, while heavy luggage was landed to the quay by mechanical conveyors.



Also on the upper level were two separate reception waiting halls, the 221' x 102' northern one for first and tourist-class and the 201' x 102' southern one for cabin-class, each with adjoining the customs examination areas. The halls, furnished by Maples, had seating, refreshment buffet, iced-water fountain, writing rooms, cable and telegraph offices, travel agency and rail booking offices, rooms for use of BBC and press, 12 separate telephone cubicles, banking/bureaux de change and WH Smith news-stands. The building had heating and air-conditioning systems, whilst the two floors were connected by 4 stairs, 21 lifts and 4 escalators capable of handling 4,000 people/hour. 75 loudspeakers relayed messages and allowed passengers cars to be called when required, from the northern and southern car parks.

*British Transport Commission photos*

The semi-circular tower at the seaward end was functional as well as decorative, housing the Customs offices and bonded baggage stores, although I later remember part was converted to into a model room containing the scale port layout and ship models.

Half way along the terminal, on the opposite side of White Star Road (later renamed Ocean Road), was a 6600-volt electrical transformer station. This was enclosed in a separate structure to match the main terminal and incorporated a public staircase over the road and rail lines, then through the roof of the terminal to the full-length roof-level sightseeing balcony viewing area, from where visitors could watch arrivals or departures without interfering with work inside the Terminal.

In the mid/late 1960's, a favourite trip out in the summer, starting from the Civic Centre, was the City open-top bus tour of the Old and New Docks, including a visit to the sightseeing balcony and model room (*fare 3 shillings (15p) or 2 shillings (10p) for children*).

From the 1st January 1948, the Docks became part of British Railways, with the Railway Executive pursuing the construction of the Terminal. By the time that the building was completed, the port operations had become the Docks & Inland Waterways Executive and later Docks, Shipping and Waterways section of the British Transport Commission, which in 1962 became the British Transport Docks Board. The BTBD was privatised in 1981, becoming Associated British Ports.



Shortly afterwards, in 1983, despite much local pressure to retain this historic landmark building, the Ocean Terminal was demolished.

Moored alongside at the quay during the demolition was the laid-up Blue Funnel 1972-built steam-turbine 218,035 dwt OBO **Tantalus**, itself a victim of changing times having traded for less than 10 years of its short 15 year life before being scrapping.

*1950 aerial photo showing new Ocean Terminal nearing completion and Queen Elizabeth at 46/7 berth, now the site of the newer Ocean Cruise Terminal (OCT).*

David Hornsby

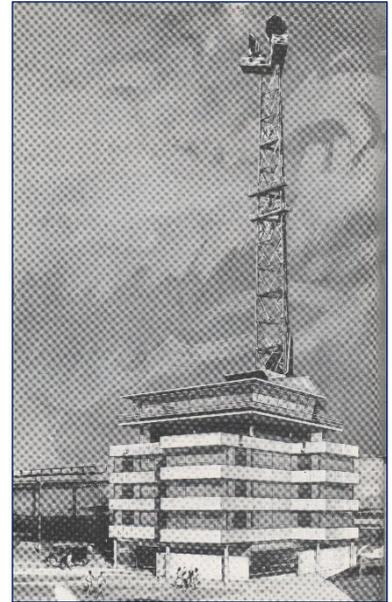
# CHANGES TO PORT SKYLINE

## DEMOLITION OF PORT LANDMARKS – PART 1

Between November 2019 and January 2020, the Vessel Traffic Service building and tower at Berth 37 and the adjoining southern end of Queen Elizabeth II Terminal were demolished, after some 50 years overlooking Southampton Water at the confluence of the Rivers Itchen and Test.

The six-storey Port communications centre was constructed during 1971 at Dock Head by A J Dunning & Sons (Weyhill) Ltd for the British Transport Docks Board, replacing the former Southampton Harbour Board port operations centre at Calshot Castle, which itself had only been inaugurated in January 1958. As early as 1965, a new Harbour Board installation was being planned, but following their amalgamation with BTDB in 1968, it was decided to construct the new facility at Berth 37, just south of the Queen Elizabeth II terminal, which opened in 1966. The new building provided accommodation and offices for the dock and harbour masters, their staff, pilots and on the top floor an control room for the operations officer and duty pilot with six 16" displays covering the entire port. The building was surmounted by a 200-ft mast with microwave aerials and daylight signals/signal lights, replacing the manned signal posts at the Empress Dock entrance, Dock Head, the Ocean Dock entrance and Mayflower Park.

The facility, providing full radar and VHF radio coverage of the port area, became fully operational in Spring 1972, when it was referred to as *"one of the world's most sophisticated harbour surveillance and shipping information systems, fully integrated with Trinity House pilots and H.M. Coastguard"*. It remained fully operational until November 2016, when the service was transferred to Ocean Gate, where new updated equipment was installed.



(artists impression from 1971 Shipping Guide)



After the main construction, the building was fitted-out at a cost of £250,000 with a Marconi Communications maritime VHF radio-telephone network and advanced computer-assisted Decca Radar equipment, incorporating Deccaspot channel centreline plotting, all covering the 20 miles from the container berths to the Nab Tower. As part of the work, Decca Radar also equipped two 25-ft remotely-operated scanners, microwave linked to the communications centre, one on a steel lattice tower at the unmanned Hythe radar station and the other on the new 110 ft Coastguard station at Calshot. Marconi also installed a transmitting station at the former Dock House in Canute Road and a separate receiving station at Titchfield to minimise channel interference.

Left: November 2019 just before demolition commenced.

**The new berth 38/9 passenger terminal was first announced in 1964, when a decision was made to bulldoze the existing 70 year old Victorian sheds and reconstruct the two berths originally built in the 1890's. The former quay wall was strengthened, while the quay apron was widened from 35 feet to 50 feet. The new multi-purpose passenger/cargo terminal building was 925 feet long and 163 feet wide with transit sheds at each end and a central two-storey passenger lounge. A high-level viewing gallery ran along the southern and northern ends of the building, together with the full-length of the seaward side, accessed at the southern end via an external stairwell and from the car park at the northern end by a stairwell and partly enclosed bridge/walkway over Test Road.**

On 15 July 1966, HM The Queen officially opened the new passenger terminal, this being the first Royal opening ceremony in the Port since King George V and Queen Mary opened No.7 Drydock in 1933, although the new terminal was not named until January 1967, when approval was finally given for the building to be named **Queen Elizabeth II Terminal**. The Daily Echo reported that *"the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh drove into the Docks through lines of waving, cheering people ... passing the Queen Elizabeth, named after the Queen's mother, who had launched the liner in 1939"*.

**The building was completed two months ahead of schedule at a cost of £1.4 million and was primarily intended for ships requiring comparatively short turn-rounds, such as from Holland-America, French Line and United States Line.**

*However, the first commercial passenger voyage from the terminal was by Iberia sailing to Australia in September 1966. One unusual aspect of the design was the “free-pattern” Axminster carpet on the walls of the passenger lounge, to help absorb sound, which remained in place ‘unused’ for 37 years.*

In 2003, in anticipation of the arrival of **Queen Mary 2**, the terminal had a major refurbishment, including equipment upgrades and a radical new look, after an investment of £5m from ABP and Carnival UK. The northern transit area was altered to provide improved undercover drop-off facilities, the ground floor baggage hall was enlarged and on the first floor the passenger lounge was given a new brighter décor, while new improved ship-to-shore walkways were installed.

Over the New Year and immediately prior to the demolition of the VTS building in January 2020, work was carried out to demolish the southern cargo section of the QEII Terminal, the long-closed external stair access to the viewing balcony and the southern sections of the balcony. This has provided a significantly enlarged parking area and roadway, allowing 38/9 berth to be used more easily by vehicle carriers. The demolished cargo storage area has been replaced with a new 21,000 sq.m. warehouse built at a cost of £4.3m, constructed immediately north of the 36 berth silos. The new building will be used by Norwegian Gram Car Carrier AS vessels (most of which have a ‘Viking’ prefix) for under-cover storage of large agricultural and building plant and machinery.



*Views in mid-January 2020 showing (left) VTS building with aerial tower removed and demolition started and (right) recladding started on the new southern end elevation to the Queen Elizabeth II Terminal.*

**Part 2 – the proposed demolition of SOLENT MILLS to follow in the next edition of BLACK JACK**

David Hornsby

## Bits and Pieces

Andrew in his notebook has already mentioned some of the cruise ship movements in Southampton due to coronavirus – a little further afield a number of our familiar ships have spent some time at anchor in Weymouth Bay. Noted there a little while ago were **Queen Victoria, Queen Mary 2, Aurora, Azura, Arcadia** and **Britannia** but it is a movable feast with much coming and going! Meanwhile the entire Fred Olsen fleet is at present anchored in the Firth of Forth.

*right – an unusual caller to 101 berth was **AAL Melbourne** (2013/23,930g) on 23th May – she arrived from St John, Antigua and discharged yachts and motor cruisers and then sailed for Antwerp.  
photo David Oldham*



Your editor is always pleased to receive any articles and/or pictures on the local scene that you may be able to submit. Particularly useful would be articles which are not date sensitive and so could be used at any time.

I am happy to receive items by any method – email to [gillrobinson@freenetname.co.uk](mailto:gillrobinson@freenetname.co.uk) or [nigelvrobinson@gmail.com](mailto:nigelvrobinson@gmail.com) on CD or memory stick, or hard copy at meetings or by post to 2 Glencarron Way, Bassett, Southampton, SO16 7EF.

# A – Z of Sail

by Michael Page

## ***For the letter “U” I have chosen the USS CONSTITUTION***

USS **Constitution** was built by Colonel George Claghorn at Edmund Hartts Shipyard at Boston, Massachusetts, based on plans drawn up by Joshua Humphreys.

The USS **Constitution** is a wooden Hulled 3-masted Heavy Frigate of the United States Navy. She was one of 6 frigates ordered by President George Washington in 1794 and was named for the constitution of the United States of America.

She was eventually launched on 21st October 1797 - it was a longer journey than expected. The ship had been completed a month prior to that date, but the first attempt dropped her only 27ft as she ground to a halt on the wooden ways. Two days later, more fanfare followed as the builders tried a second time, but she stopped after just 31 ft. Finally on the 21 October after workers increased the steepness of the ways, the USS Constitution made it to the sea. She set sail in an operational capacity the following spring, just in time to join the line of battle during the Quasi war with France. She took part in the 1812-1815 war with the UK. From an inauspicious beginning came an American symbol of grit and determination unrivalled in the nations history.

She was frigate was a fifth rate ship out of six rates of line and was a comparatively small ship, but Humphreys' Frigates were unique in that they were larger than other frigates as well as being faster because they had a more streamlined hull. In fact they were so big that they could defeat any other frigate, and were fast enough that they could outrun more powerful ships. In those days it was more acceptable to run from a battle against a ship of war of greater size. **Constitutions** great speed was made possible by spreading more than 43,000 ft of canvas, nearly an acre of sail.

With this sort of reputation USS **Constitution** (“Old Ironsides”) had a long, happy and successful career with the US Navy and made and has kept her reputation to this day.

The **Constitution** was a unique item of war said Colonel David G Fitz-Enz author of Old Ironsides, Eagle of the Sea in Prologue, the magazine of the National Archives and Records Administration.

Length 204 ft - waterline 175 ft - breath 43 ft 5 ins  
Displacement Tonnage is 2200 tons and she had a normal crew of 450 to 475.  
She has a good speed of 13 knots as armed by thirty-two 24 pound long guns, two 24-pound bow chasers and twenty 32 pound carronades.  
She had a sail area of 43,710 square feet.

*various views of USS Constitution*

