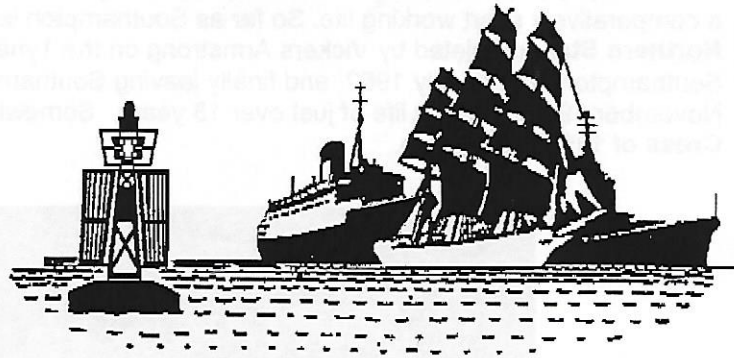


# Black Jack

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH  
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY

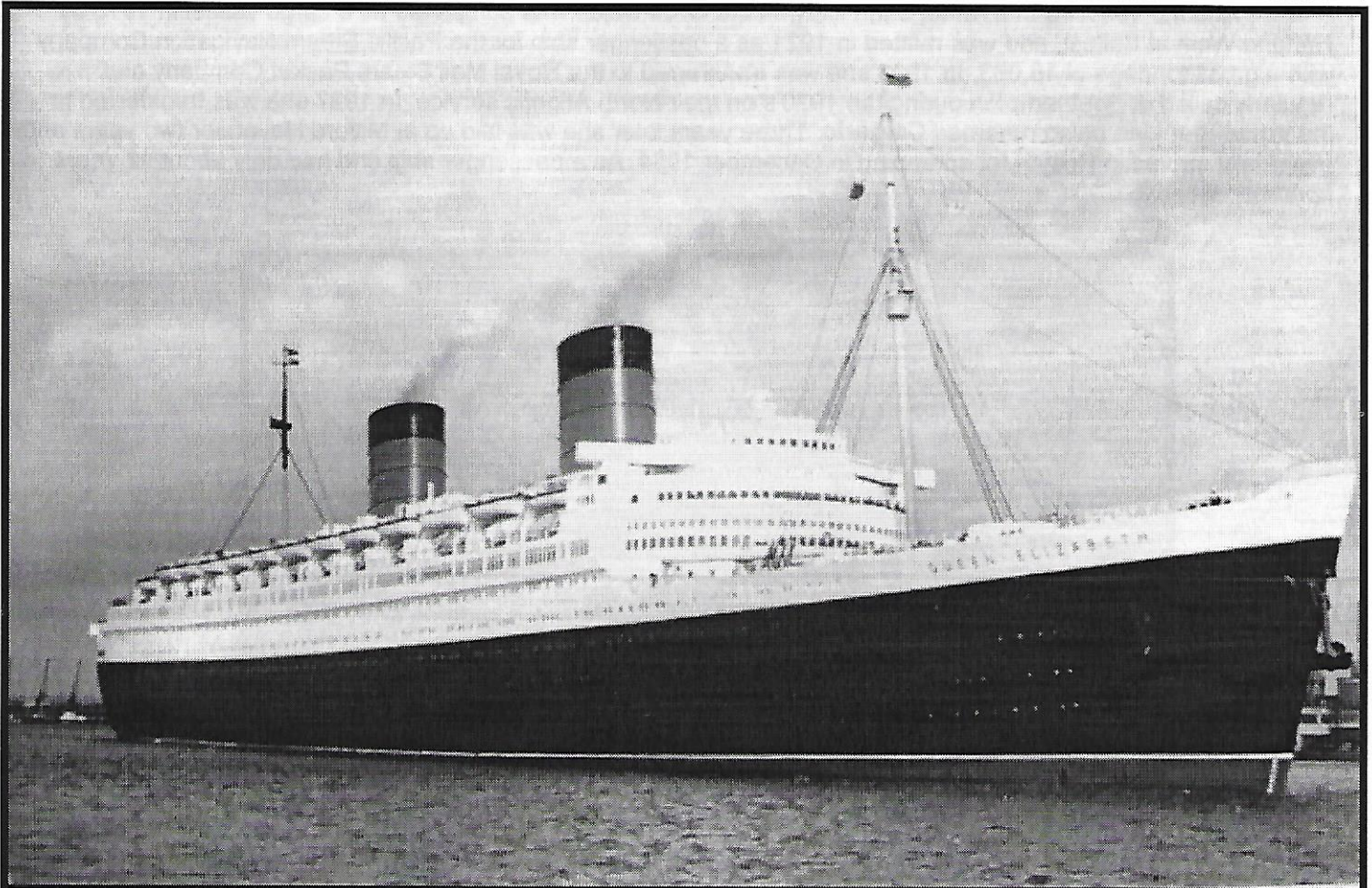


Issue No: 106

Winter 1998

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Queen Elizabeth

Photograph from M Lindsay collection .

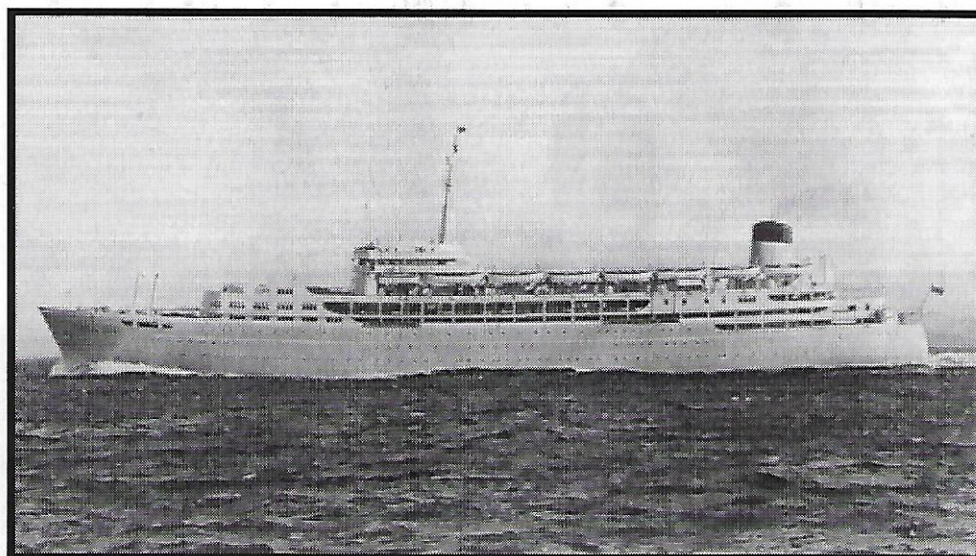
## Ships with Short Lives – Bert Moody

Many ships have had their lives cut short by disasters etc., but there are several vessels, which have had a comparatively short working life. So far as Southampton is concerned one of the most notable was Shaw Savill's **Northern Star** completed by Vickers Armstrong on the Tyne in 1962, making her maiden voyage to Australia from Southampton on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1962, and finally leaving Southampton for the breakers yard in Kaohsiung on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1975 – a short life of just over 13 years. Somewhat surprising is that her running partner – **Southern Cross** of 1955 is still going.



Northern Star

Another vessel with a rather short life was the **Orca** which was completed as a cargo vessel in 1918 by Harland Wolff at Belfast, and was refitted in 1921 as a passenger ship for the Pacific Steam Navigation Company with a gross tonnage of 16,063. In 1923 she was transferred to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company and regularly called at Southampton during the 1920's on their North Atlantic service. In 1927 she was transferred to the White Star Line being renamed **Calgaric**. Three years later she was laid up at Milford Haven for two years and eventually arrived in Rosyth for scrapping in December 1934. As a passenger ship she had only about 12 years operational service.



Southern Cross

Two more ships which had short lives were the **Minnewaska** 21,716 and **Minnetonka** 21,998 built in 1923 and 1924 respectively for the Atlantic Transport Line, each having accommodation for 370 passengers, were both being scrapped at the end of 1934.

Two Union Castle ships which operated on the Round South Africa service – the **Rhodesia Castle** 51/17038 and **Braemar Castle** 52/17024 only saw 16 years service and 14 years service respectively – the **Rhodesia Castle** being broken up in Taiwan in 1967 and the **Braemar Castle** in 1966 at Faslane. Their running partner the **Kenya Castle**, which became Chandris **Amerikanis** still exists today, although at present laid up at Eleusis since October 1996.

The last war, of course, shortened the lives of many ships – the most important one so far as Southampton was concerned being Canadian Pacific's **Empress of Britain** – completed by John Brown on Clydebank in 1931 and sunk in 1940. Among other ships lost during that war having Southampton connections were Union Castle's **Warwick Castle** of 1930/1. Having disembarked troops in North Africa was returning empty in convoy in November 1942 when she was torpedoed and sunk in the North Atlantic, and the local paddle steamer **Gracie Fields**, completed by J.I. Thornycroft's at Woolston in 1936 was lost off Dunkirk in 1940.

Disasters have been the main reason for a number of ships having short lives. The **Titanic** needs no introduction, but she was not the only ship to be lost on her maiden voyage. Messageries Maritimes **George Philippar** 17,539 commenced her maiden voyage from Marseilles to the Far East in February 1932. But on the homeward run of that voyage the ship was destroyed by fire on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 1932 in the Gulf of Aden, and sank three days later - 54 passengers lost their lives. Royal Mail Lines **Magdalena** 17,547 gross tons left London for South America on her maiden voyage on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1949, and on the homeward run went aground on the Tijucas rocks off Rio de Janeiro on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1949 and became a total loss.

In more recent times the vehicle carrier **Reijin** 88/58128 with about 5,000 cars on board stranded when leaving Leixos on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1988 on her maiden voyage from Japan to European ports, the vessel heeled over and became a total loss, being broken up on site.

The **Waratah** 1908/9339 owned by Blue Anchor Line had a very short life for she went missing on her second voyage while en route from Durban to Capetown in July 1909. A total of 211 passengers and crew were lost.

Only two years after the sinking of the **Titanic** there was another major disaster, which is rarely mentioned today – Canadian Pacific's **Empress of Ireland** 1906/14191 was in collision with the Norwegian **Storstad** in dense fog in the St. Lawrence River on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1914. The passenger ship sank in a very short time with the loss of 1024 passengers and crew.

Furness Withy's **Bermuda**, completed in 1927 by Workman Clark at Belfast for the New York to Bermuda service was badly damaged by fire in June 1931. The vessel returned to Belfast for a major refit, but shortly before this work was completed in November 1931 she was completely destroyed by fire. The wreck was sold for breaking up at Rosyth, but she never reached Rosyth for on the way while under tow but the tug **Seaman** the wreck ran aground on Bedcall Islands, North Scotland.

The **Highland Hope** 14,129 gross tons, one of a group of five passenger motor ships built by Harland & Wolff for the Nelson Line made her maiden voyage in January 1930. In the November of the same year she went aground on the Farilhoes Rocks when arriving at Vigo in fog and became a total loss. The **Highland Patriot** was completed in 1932 as a replacement.

The large three funneled passenger ship **L'Atlantique** made her maiden voyage in September 1931. Just over a year later on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 1933 she was sailing from Bordeaux to Le Havre for dry-docking when she caught fire and was badly damaged. The vessel was towed into Cherbourg where she remained until being sold for scrap on the Clyde in 1936.

White Star Line's **Doric**, completed in 1923 was badly damaged in collision with the French vessel **Formigny** in fog off Finisterre in September 1935, and then **Doric** was immediately sold for scrap being broken up by Cashmores at Newport, Mon.

Another short lived passenger ship was Dodero Line's **Maipu** 51/11515 – she entered service in May 1951 and on the 4<sup>th</sup> November of the same year she was in collision in thick fog off the Weser lightship with the American transport **General M.L. Hersey**. She sank within three hours, but all her passengers and crew were saved.

The Italian **Andrea Doria** was only three years old when she was in collision in dense fog about 100 miles out of New York with then Swedish America Line's **Stockholm** in July 1956 and sank with the loss of 47 lives.

Booth Line's **Hildebrand** 51/7735, which was in Southampton in June 1953 in connection with the Coronation Naval review, was wrecked in fog on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1957 near Lisbon.

Finally a ship which really did not have any life at all was the Italian **Principessa Jolanda**, which was launched near Spezia on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1907. It was claimed at that time that the ship would be the largest Italian vessel, accommodation being provided for about 1450 passengers. However, as she was launched a part of the launching cradle remained attached to the ship and this caused her to heel over and sink. The boilers were recovered, but the rest of the ship was scrapped.

# The Portsmouth International Festival of the Sea 1998

A few personal reflections.

The Festival of the Sea attracted me to Portsmouth on two occasions. The first was the Thursday before the event when I thought it would be a chance to observe and photograph some of the vessels underway.

My usual vantage point at Old Portsmouth is the small pier just to the South of the Round Tower, the latter gives excellent views, but becomes so crowded that photography becomes a matter of chance. I therefore headed for my chosen "pitch" to find three other avid ship photographers all ready in position, one from Scotland, another from the Midlands and the third, almost local, from Dorset, which shows how the Festival had drawn enthusiasts from all over the country.

The main attraction on the Thursday was the Arrival of the **Libertad** and **Sedov** plus a couple of the foreign naval ships. The "tall ships" taught us how to be patient - they would appear on the horizon from behind the Eastern end of the Isle of Wight, then move very slowly across the horizon to disappear from view beyond the Southsea funfair. Much later they would reappear, moving just as slowly, but in the opposite direction, following the deep-water channel almost as far as Ryde, only then would they turn into the channel to eventually enter Portsmouth.

These two vessels arrived at the opposite ends of the day, the **Libertad** in the morning and **Sedov** in the afternoon. Fortunately there was plenty of activity in between. The replica 18th Century Frigate **Grand Turk** obligingly left harbour, sailed around the Solent for a while and returned, various small naval and auxiliary vessels and countless yachts moved in and out of Portsmouth plus of course vessels arriving for the Festival. The latter included the tug **Brocklebank** (from Liverpool), the **Medusa (ML 1387)**, the **RAF Launch 1387** (there's a coincidence!), **S.S. Shieldhall** from Southampton, and the Round the World record breaking **Cable & Wireless Adventurer**. In addition to the ships there was quite a lot of helicopter activity as they flew in for the event, usually arriving with a low level pass through the harbour entrance, all good fun and a chance to observe the various types now in Naval Service.

Naval movements included the Ice Patrol Ship **Endurance**; she had sailed from Spithead earlier to pick up her helicopter before entering Portsmouth. The German submarine **26** had us guessing for hours as to whether that "Lump with a stick on top" on the horizon was a surfaced sub. or just one of the many buoys that can be seen in that area. Finally the Belgian Frigate **Wandelaar** arrived, with the tug **Powerful** keeping carefully alongside it so as to make photography impossible!

Bonuses for photographs however were the unannounced arrival of the three masted barque **Kaskelot**, and just as we were packing up to leave after the arrival of the **Sedov**, hearing over the scanner that the **Auckland Star** was on her way out from the Commercial Docks. We therefore had the chance to capture one of these elusive reefers, sadly now in Fyffes colours. Not a bad day for ship lovers.

My wife and I decided to attend the Festival on the Sunday. The event has been described by Mike Lindsay in his article, so I won't go into much detail, only to say what an overpowering experience it was with such a mass of ships and boats of all possible shapes and sizes. We spent the whole day there from 9.30 in the morning till the Royal Marines Concert ended at 11 p.m., but still felt that there was much we had not seen. Personal highlights were a look around **HMS Endurance**, the Navy and Marines demonstration in No.3 Basin, the wall to wall small boats in No.2 Basin and the nostalgia of the Swordfish fly-past which coincided with our old friend the restored **RAF HSL 102** cruising around the harbour - quite a fitting combination.

The Organisers of the Festival of the Seas have to be congratulated for producing such an excellent event.

Bill Lawes

# Monty's Notebook.....by Monty Beckett

A summary of new or infrequent callers.

## 204/7:

NOL Coral 65475/98, P&O Nedlloyd Southampton 80600/98, APL Almandine 49716/93, P&O Nedlloyd Damietta 36500/97, Freya 1546/91, Marinier 1630/86, P&O Nedlloyd Rotterdam, NOL Amazonite 49716/93, P&O Nedlloyd Barcelona 36606/97, Pano 3300/86, London Express 53800/98, Atlantik 4193/93, Ville De Taurus 40480/97, Ville De Aquarius 40465/96, Ville De Antares 40400/97, Palayo, Jana 3125/90, Camira 4107/97.

## Marchwood Bulk:

Rulewave Warrior 1473/78, Coastal Breeze 2463/90, Mathilde 2526/81.

## Marchwood RLC:

Soccl-6 6030/92, Echo Pioneer 9691/81, Alania 4366/83, Scottish Star 10291/85, Strong Virginian 16169/84, Kochnav 6030/89, Musa Damai, Sea Centurian, Frigga 3230/87, Atlantic Crusader,

## APL Dry Dock:

Torben Maersk 17708/90, Paipote 19354/96, Sailed as Clipper Fantasy, Jarikaba 4238/86, CSAV Ranco 16430/84, Sails as Merkur Sea, Stellar Bent 16725/90, Easter Express 8500/97.

## 107/108:

Akrop 35911/83, Athinai P 13661/73, Petrokrepost 4909/70, Frisiana 1240/91, Melissa 1989/77, Kasteelborg 6142/98, General Madalinski 23425/75, Jack Junior 3041/67, Merweborg 6540/97.

## 106:

Jo Spirit 4406/98.

## 104:

Winter Wave 16003/79, Kiwi 8052/83, Global Harvest 8520/93

## 102/103:

Mare Trader 1300/83, Elke 1299/84, Arklow Sea 2300/98, Berys Trader 1291/85, Empire 1981/91.

## 102:

Jevington 7702/77, Atlantic 1998/97.

## 101/102:

Colombian Star 98/11700, Swan Lake 10424/80.

## RoRo Vessel:

Atlantic Highway 24335/82, Grande America 56642/97, Grande Europa 51714/98, Marcelina 9963/76, Porgy 21722/78, Bess 21722/79, Trianon 49792/87, Terrier 47947/82, Seabridge 5236/74, Atlantica 8553/82, Aries 5596/79, Cygnus Leader 57623/98, Tai Swan 48676/86, Grande Mediterraneo 52700/98, Asia Vision 55680/97, Tagus 48357/85, Sea Dolphin 11400/72, Asian Grace 55680/96, Asian Captain 55792/98, Asian Chorus 55729/97, Ocean Spirit 47561/85, Princess Arrow 47847/81.

## 36/47:

Sloane 4909/71, Aurelia 5381/98, Stako 1533/81, Katia 4909/68, Burg 4413/76, Verdon 14929/81, Xi Hai 20569/75, Northern Liftnes 2446/96, Lydia Flag 1805/71, Solway Fisher 1707/77, Albert 2970/84, Elan 2377/97, Sormovskiy-5 2478/68, Fione 2348/67, Natali 1 1637/76, European 1 3883/75, Big G 39242/76, S. Pioneer 21309/84, Beatanavis 24950/85, African Begonia 6476/79, Pioneer Onegi 7370/75, Christos 1 3405/73, Bunga Sara Lapan 38489/98.

## 40/41:

Seaway Eagle 9556/97.

## 43/4:

Zirfara 1216/93, AB Valencia 2844/96, Leon 17128/79.

## 49:

Ocean Explorer

## 30:

Trina 5799/95.

## 26:

Pelagia 1615/91

## 25:

Hamlet 3638/68.

## Dibles Wharf:

Julia 2140/67, Victor 2740/68, Northern Land 2446/97, Maria 1 2740/70, Sunrise 2449/92, Northern Lindnes 2446/97, Omega-4 1472/72, Coral 851/88, Alexandra 51431/72, Leszek G 1592/77, Bettina K 2449/94, Nicky L 1220/76, Coral, Arosia 1678/77, Ladoga 101 1853/88, Zuppert 2578/78, Roger 1520/84, Breitenburg 1939/82, Triumph 997/86, Beate 1223/69, Ann S 1139/86.

## Princes Wharf:

Steinburg 1939/82, Kaaksburg 1939/81, Mina Mare 1583/76, St Christoph 2300/77.

## Dredgers/Hopper Barges:

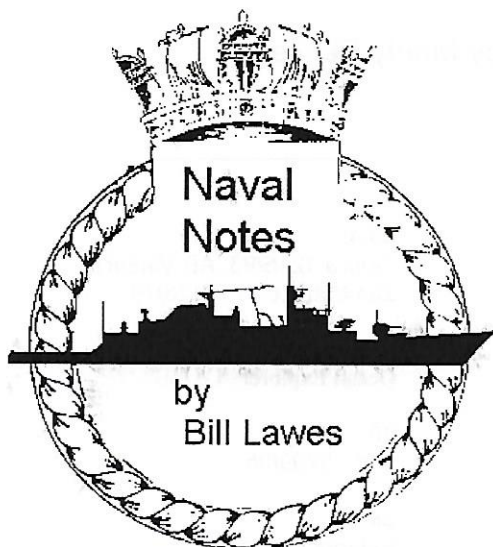
City of Cardiff 2074/97, Ville 495/85, Sand Falcon, Sand Fulmar 5307/98.

## Tugs:

Flying Wizard, Lady Hammond 498/85, Afon Lass, Falmouth Bay 306/59.

## Passenger Shipping:

Astra 11 9849/74, Delphin 16214/75, R One, Rembrandt 38644/59, Princess Danae 9783/55, Superstar Leo 75000/98, Astra 11 9849/74, The Emerald 26431/58, Edinburgh Castle 32753/66.



This quarter's visitors to the Port have been restricted to one French destroyer and three RFA tankers. The latter have included the now rather elderly sister ships **Olwen** and **Olna**, both of these were built by Hawthorne Leslie at Hebburn and launched in 1964 & 1965 respectively. These ships are designed for the underway replenishment of fuel and "vert. rep." of stores by helicopter, for which they can carry two Sea Kings. Their cargo capacity is 16000 tons of diesel, 2700 tons of Avcat plus supplies of lub. oil and fresh water. They have a tonnage of 18600 gross and are powered by steam turbines of 26500hp driving a single prop. for a speed of 20 kts. Although quite old, these ships are still in active use. **Olwen** has been engaged as the Flag Officer Sea Training ( FOST ) tanker at Plymouth - this is the section of the Navy that assess ships during their "work up" period following recommissioning's etc. **Olna** took part in the Joint Maritime Course prior to arriving at Southampton. The third ship of the class **Olmeda** was sold for scrap in 1994 sailing for Indian breakers under the name **Niaxco**.

The third RFA tanker in Port was **Bayleaf**; the three ships of this class (**Brambleleaf** & **Orangeleaf** being the other two) were built as commercial tankers then converted to RFA Support Tankers.

**Bayleaf** entered service in 1982 having been built by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead; she has a gross tonnage of 20761 tons and is powered by 2 Pielstick diesels of 14000 h.p. geared to a single prop. for 16 kts. These ships are used mainly for bunkering duties but they are fitted with one oiling rig on each beam for underway refuelling. The fourth ship of the class, **Appleleaf** was transferred to Australia in 1989 and renamed Westralia.

Our visitor from France was the Tourville class destroyer **De Grasse**. These vessels have a full load displacement of nearly 6000 tons. Their armament includes "Exocet" Surface to Surface (SSM), "Crotale" (SAM) and "Malafon" (A/S) missiles plus 2 - 100mm guns and anti-submarine torpedoes. The ships can also operate two Lynx helicopters. During a refit in the mid 1990's **De Grasse** was also fitted with a "towed active sonar" system. The ship was launched in 1974 at Lorient Naval Dockyard; she is powered by steam turbines of 58000 h.p. for a speed of 32 kts. These ships being almost contemporary to the early Type 42 destroyers of the RN make an interesting comparison of designs. The French ships appear to have a more comprehensive armament, whereas the British have a smaller displacement (4100tons) but the advantage of gas turbine propulsion.

In October Adrian Tennet managed to organise a visit for a small party of members from our Branch to three Dutch vessels that were visiting Portsmouth. The largest ship was the Support Tanker **Amsterdam**, she has visited Southampton and was described in a previous Black Jack. It was however interesting to see her vast storage areas, modern navigation equipment and learn that she has now been fitted with a bow-thruster unit and also that she was carrying two RN Sea King helicopters, which she was to operate in a forthcoming NATO exercise. The other two vessels were the frigates **De Ruyter** and **Abraham Van der Hulst**. These made a very interesting comparison between the oldest and newest designs in the Dutch Navy. The **De Ruyter** was launched in 1974 by De Schelde at Flushing as one of the two ships in the Tromp class - the huge radar dome at the rear of the bridge easily identifies them. For armament they are fitted with "Harpoon" SSM, "Standard" & "Sea Sparrow" SAM together with a twin 120mm gun (for which we learnt they no longer make ammunition - it's not needed with modern weapons) and a "Goalkeeper" Close-in-Weapon System (CIWS). The propulsion for these ships is provided by a combination of Olympus & Tyne gas turbines, maximum speed is 30 kts. and full load displacement 4300 ton. The **Abraham Van der Hulst** was built in the same yard as **De Ruyter** but was not commissioned until 1994. She is one of 8 ships that form the Karel Doorman class. This class displaces 3320 tons full load and is powered by Spey gas turbines and Wartsila diesels (CODOG) giving speeds of 30 kts on the gas turbines and 18kts. on the diesels. The armament consists of "Harpoon" SSM and "Sea Sparrow" SAM - these latter being a vertical launch system - the launchers are installed alongside the port side of the after superstructure - a rather unusual arrangement. They also have the Goalkeeper gun - very successful Dutch design that is fitted to some RN ships such as the Invincible class carriers - and a single 76 mm OTO Melara gun.

Many thanks to Adrian for making the arrangements for this visit and also to the very courteous officers who showed us round their ships.

The new RFA vessel **Sea Centurion** arrived at Marchwood on November 6th. Our Editor has included her details elsewhere in the magazine.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH by Mick Lindsay

It was in sharp contrast to the departure of her elder sister, *Queen Mary*, the previous year, when **RMS Queen Elizabeth** left her home port of Southampton for the last time on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1968, for a new future as a hotel, museum and convention centre at Port Everglades, Florida.

It was a dull, foggy morning as the great ship made her way down river, with as few people to see her off as there were thousands for the *Mary* when she left.

It was an apology of a departure, with only a few of the ships in port acknowledging her with their whistles. An even greater irony was when an electrical fault in her whistle control gear prevented her from returning the compliment.

The ship's most famous captain, Commodore Geoffrey Marr, referred to it as "...a British understatement with a vengeance, as though the British world of ships and shiplovers looked the other way until she had gone!" His wife was more to the point and said it was a disgrace.

She had always lived in the shadow of the *Queen Mary* and so it was when her time with Cunard came to an end.

It was strange that a ship technologically superior to her elder sister and arguably, better looking, should turn out to be less popular with both passengers and crew. Perhaps it is more correct to say that the *Queen Mary* was more popular as both ships etched their names into the nation's consciousness and for many years carried record levels of passenger bookings.

Both ships had started their lives in less than perfect circumstances, the *Mary* almost a victim of the depression, and the *Lizzie* sent off to war in a less than finished condition.

She was an obvious target for the Luftwaffe while she was fitting out on the Clyde and, so, an elaborate plan was hatched to get her to safety. It was put about that the ship would sail for Southampton and involved great secrecy, even to the crew believing that was their destination.

The crews of the German Condor aircraft that gathered over the English Channel could only curse their luck when the ship failed to appear as they had believed she would.

She had, in fact, made a dash across the Atlantic to New York in a less than finished condition, with no heating, electrical wiring covering the decks, a minimum number of lifeboats and some of her launching gear still attached to her hull.

But the *Lizzie* made it and, after refitting as a troopship, she and her sister embarked on a phenomenally successful war 'career' which, at times, saw the two carrying over 15,000 troops each at speeds which could outrun U-boats and surface raiders alike.

Only ill fortune was ever likely to lead to their demise and the pair ended the hostilities covered in glory for their part in it and being credited by Winston Churchill with shortening the conflict by a year.

The *Queen Elizabeth* was the first of the sisters to be put back into commercial service and also the first ship to restart the post-war Trans-Atlantic passenger run. It was on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 1946, that the great ship, dressed overall for the occasion, left Southampton for New York for the first time as a passenger ship, six years after that initial dash for safety.

In the ensuing years the two ships were to become wonderfully successful at the job they were designed for and for fifteen years or so were the most successful ships in the world, carrying vast numbers of passengers and making huge profits for Cunard.

As with all things, though, it could not last and when Britain's DeHavilland Comet made its inaugural commercial flight in 1952, it was the first indication of what was to come but it was the Boeing 707 of 1958 that really put the writing on the wall for the Atlantic liner.

In 1960 alone jet aircraft made 70,000 crossings of "the Pond".

By the early sixties the ships (and most of their contemporaries) were sailing only 25% full on occasions, a situation that could not go on. It was decided to refit *Queen Elizabeth* for more cruising, this including a new lido deck and outdoor pool, air conditioning and more cabins with private facilities.

This was intended to keep the ship operational for another ten years and to run in consort with the new *QE2* but the seamen's strike of 1966 had far-reaching effects and cost the company £14 million. Passenger levels were not up to expectations and it was decided to retire the old lady in 1968.

Things did not work out when the ship went to Port Everglades either. It seemed a good idea at the time; the *Queen Mary* was doing well in California and there was every reason to expect the same for the *Lizzie*.

She lost money and after being closed as a fire hazard by the local authorities her owners filed for bankruptcy. The ship was auctioned off and sold to Hong Kong shipping magnate, C. Y. Tung.

He intended for the ship to become a floating university and was cleverly renamed *Seawise University* (CY's university!).

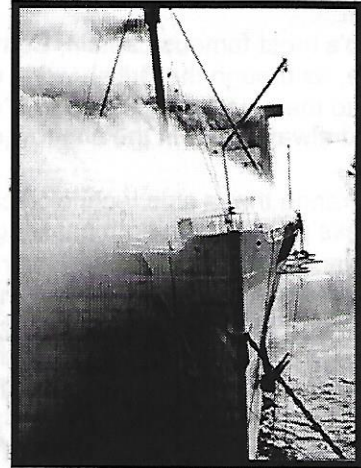
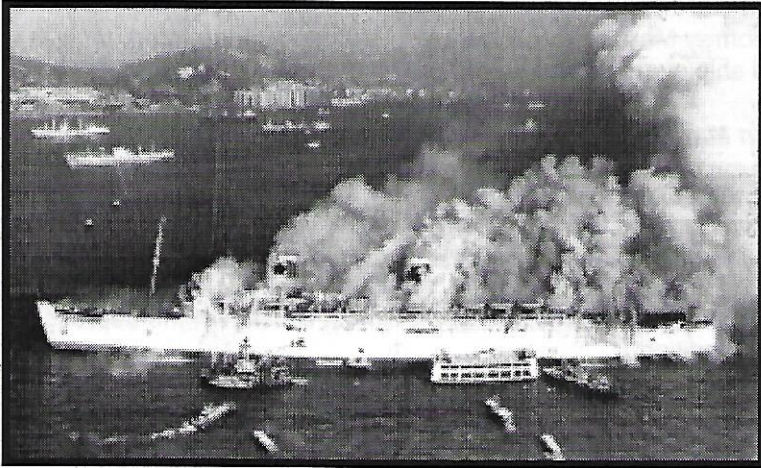
She left for Hong Kong on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1971, under her own steam but a little battered and tired-looking. On the bridge, fittingly, was her last master with Cunard, Commodore Geoffrey Marr. She actually arrived under tow, as her machinery was giving problems but work soon started on her conversion.

She was almost finished when, during the night of January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1972, several fires started on the ship and soon engulfed the vessel. She burned fiercely through the next 24 hours and it was a week before she finally burnt out.

An enquiry decided that it was arson (surprise, surprise) but no culprit could be found. The following year the work to cut her up began, although it was never completely cleared.

The remains caused a few complications when a new harbour tunnel was built and more demolition had to be undertaken. Part of the ship is still there but is now under the runway of the new airport in Hong Kong.

She was a magnificent ship with a long and successful career and though she had a Viking's funeral, she ended up second-best to her sister in death as in life.



## • News in Brief:

- On the 9<sup>th</sup> November ABP reached an agreement with the Fyffes group limited and Geest Bananas limited for both companies to consolidate their banana import operation at Southampton. The Windward Terminal will be extended to accommodate additional fresh produce from Fyffes. Total throughput of imported fruit and outbound cargo is estimated at 450,00 tonnes annually.
- Southampton has been confirmed as the UK port of call for Compagnie Maritime d'Affretement (CMA), Norasia Line and the National Shipping Company of Saudi Arabia (NSCSA) lines new North Europe/Middle East Far East service. The weekly service will operate nine ships of 4000 teu from mid November. Initially CMA will deploy the tonnage with NCSA contributing vessels in 1999.
- Southampton has a new harbour launch; the vessel was named **Prospect** at a recent ceremony at Halmatic Boatyards at Northam.
- ABP has won a contract with Toyota, an export terminal is being provided for Toyota to export 20,000 Toyota vehicles annually to Italy, Greece and Turkey. Toyota Avensis and Corolla models manufactured near Derby will be exported on a weekly basis.
- Trinity House which operates 72 lighthouses, 11 light vessels and a large number of other navigational aids around the coast of England and Wales reports that its six of twelve DGPS (Differential Global Positioning System) stations were installed on schedule this August. A significant part of the plan being implemented by Trinity House, the Commissioners of Irish Lights and the Northern Lighthouse Board, the DGPS stations will facilitate the termination of the Decca Navigation System in March 2000 and the closure of the present radiobeacon service next February. Later this year Trinity House will bring to an end 400 years of lighthouse keeping with the withdrawal of keepers from the North Foreland Lighthouse in Kent. (Note: DGPS improves the accuracy for standard GPS signals in a local area).
- Stena has taken delivery from Genoa's SEC shipyard the first ro-ro cargoship in the new Stena 4-Runner Class. The **Sea Centurion** will be chartered out on a long-term basis to the British Ministry of Defence (MoD) for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. SEC of Viareggio is building another four vessels of the class for Stena. The first and second units are now intended for long term charter with the Ministry of Defence, with the second vessel the **Sea Chieftain** due for delivery between December and January. The vessels dimensions are of 182.6m long, 25.5m wide with a maximum draft of 7.4m. She is powered by four Sulzer diesel engines supplying a total output of 23.040kW at 510 rpm.





**Colombian Star** arriving 101 berth – M Beckett



**Edinburgh Castle** alongside 102 – M.Beckett

## UGANDA BOOK REVIEW

Not many ships can claim to have had four lives; to have played the part of “Mother Hen” and to have been launched not once but twice!

The four lives were those of British India Line’s famous *Uganda* – as a cargo/passenger ship, schools cruise ship, hospital, ship and troopship.

It was in the latter role, during the Falklands campaign, that she was fondly christened “Mother Hen”.

*Uganda* was launched on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1952, and she was to have a long and varied career.

The ship has long gone now, save some battered and rusty remnants still lying on the shore at Kaohsiung,

The second “launch” was in the form of a book, a veritable tome, which chronicles in great depth the life and times of a ship that could claim, at one point, to be the third most famous ship in the world. This was during the Falklands War when she was only just behind *Canberra* and *QE2* in the public’s mind.

It was this conflict which really brought to an end a varied and long career, the South Atlantic being unkind to an old lady during her spell as a hospital ship and, later, as a troop transport on government charter, spending a reputed 500 days at sea without going alongside.

The book covers all of these aspects of the ship’s career in depth and has been written with great love and affection by five people who have been closely associated with the ship and are members of the SS Uganda Trust.

This was formed, initially as the Uganda Society in 1983, with a view to saving the ship for preservation and when this failed it was agreed to form a trust and use the money raised to sponsor disadvantaged young people to make voyages at sea.

If the ship could not be saved, the society agreed, then the next best thing would be to produce a book that would be a fitting testimony to a much-loved ship.

It has taken the authors and a steering committee ten years to produce and at the book launch, held on board *Oriana*, P&O’s flagship, it soon became obvious why it had taken so long.

Produced in A4 hardback format, it is not far short of 500 pages long and is as comprehensive an account of the life of a ship as I have read. There 64 pages of appendices alone, chronicling every port the ship visited, various ship’s logs, including a complete Falklands account, sample cargo and laundry lists, sample menus and average food consumption etc.

It has over 400 black and white illustrations with another 50 in colour and the authors must be congratulated on their mammoth efforts in producing such a worthy book.

It is a book to appeal to ship lovers, ex-passengers and crew, the thousands of schoolchildren who had their first taste of the sea on *Uganda*, and the many service personnel that sailed on her. It will also appeal to anyone who loves a good story, much of it in anecdotal form supplied by people who sailed on the ship.

All profits from the sale of the book will go to the SS Uganda Trust and used to further its stated objectives.

It costs £27 (plus £2.95 post and packing) and is available from the *SS Uganda Trust, Tarven, Corfe Lodge Road, Broadstone, Dorset BH18 9NF* (cheques only). M.A.L.

## Branch Officers and Committee

### **Chairman**

John Lillywhite  
1 Thornleigh Road  
Woolston  
SO19 9DH 01703 432181

### **Vice Chairman**

Bill Lawes  
25 Rolleston Road  
Holbury  
SO45 4QD 01703 894234

### **Secretary**

Rod Baker  
29 Milbury Crescent  
Southampton  
SO18 5EN 01703 449972

### **Treasurer**

Andrew Hogg  
"Debanker"  
Lynburn Road  
Hampworth  
Salisbury  
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### **Black Jack Editor**

Neil Richardson  
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Chandlers Ford  
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### **Projectionist**

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Lordswood  
SO1 8DB

### **Visits Organiser**

Adrian Tennet  
34 New Road  
Fair Oak  
SO50 8EN 01703 600197

### **Reprographics**

Mike Lindsay  
7 Elland Close  
Fair Oak  
SO15 7JY 01703 694558

## Forthcoming Programme and Events

### **Venue:**

1<sup>st</sup> floor  
Portswood Conservative Club  
127 Highfield Lane  
Southampton  
Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Tuesday of each month at  
19.30.

### **1999 Programme**

#### **12<sup>th</sup> January**

Aircraft Carriers Part Two  
Bill Lawes

#### **9<sup>th</sup> February**

100 Years of the Port of  
Southampton  
Bert Moody

#### **9<sup>th</sup> March**

All at Sea  
Capt. W. Burns

#### **13<sup>th</sup> April**

The Last Years of the Orient  
Line – A Purser Remembers  
Nelson French

#### **11<sup>th</sup> May**

Thornycroft's  
John Lillywhite and Mick  
Lindsay

#### **8<sup>th</sup> June**

Coastal Shipping & Tripping  
Bernard McCall

#### **13<sup>th</sup> July**

Merchant Shipping 1940-60's  
Basil Devenish-Meaers

#### **10<sup>th</sup> August**

Members Evening

#### **14<sup>th</sup> September**

Photographic Competition

#### **12<sup>th</sup> October**

A Wonderful Day at .....

A membership event.

#### **9<sup>th</sup> November**

AGM (a correct date)

#### **14<sup>th</sup> December**

In Foreign Ports  
Andrew Hogg & Rod Baker

## Branch Notice Board

### **Please Note**

You may have noticed the note concerning the Data Protection Act on this year's subscription renewal form from the main society. The local branch also holds contact information on a computer database for the sole use of local branch officers. This is used for branch administration including Black Jack distribution and contact information for visits etc. Should any member wish to see the information held or have his or her own entry deleted please contact a member of the committee.

### **WSS Subscriptions 1999**

Main society and local branch subscriptions are both due for renewal on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999.

It is to the branches benefit if all subs could be paid through the branch treasurer rather than direct to the main society.

Payment should reach Andrew Hogg preferably no later than the January meeting, as the main society must have notice of renewal by the 31<sup>st</sup> January.

### **Branch Cruise 1999**

Next years cruise has been booked for **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June** 1999 for 1100 till 1800.

### **Auction**

If you have any matters outstanding the treasurer would like to hear from you asap.