



The MILLERGRAM

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Fall 2025

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.

ALONG THE PROMENADE: Like the officers on the bridge and stewards along the corridors, celebrities – from European royalty to Hollywood stars – added to the culture & sheer style of the great liners of the past. Although not onboard a ship, 83-yr-old Queen Mary is seen below touring the Festival of Britain, a grand, post-war exhibition held in London in 1951. One theme was industry & engineering and, for shipbuilding. Keen eyes will note the huge model of the Orient Line's *Oronsay*, then still building and Britain's newest liner.



CRUISING: Back in 2004, the 150,000-ton, 1132-ft long *Queen Mary 2* was the largest passenger ship yet built. It was believed by many there would be nothing larger. Well, we've just checked – and the Cunard flagship now ranks 48th largest among increasingly larger, longer & more innovative cruise ships. Royal Caribbean's *Icon of the Seas* & *Star of the Seas* at 250,000 tons & carrying up to 7,500 passengers are the current champs. Ahead, rival Carnival Cruise Lines is planning a series of 8,000-bed ships and there are projections for a mega ship with a capacity for 10,000 guests.



NEW YORK: I keep an eye on my favorite port anywhere and its changes. Luxury Liner Row – Pier 84 to 97 – has changed over the years. Boom times for Atlantic liners below, in March 1937 – the *Europa* (top), *Rex*, *Normandie*, *Georgic* & *Berengaria*. A photo from Justin Zizes.



Below: The 1960s and the *United States* at Pier 86.



Piers 88, 90 & 92 were made over as a consolidated Passenger Ship Terminal in 1973-74.

Below: *QE2* departing with *Norwegian Dream* & *Zenith* at dock.





AIDAluna, Crystal Serenity & Norwegian Breakaway at dock in 2017.



AIDAmira & Aurora in port

OCEAN LINER ARCHIVES: Looking back – on Fri Jul 14th 1960, no less than 11 passenger ships departed from New York.

The *Parthia* left Pier 92 at 11:30am. Then the *Atlantic* departed at noon from Pier 84; the *Statendam* at the same time but from Hoboken; and the *Santa Cecilia* from Pier 57.



The *Cristobal* cast off from Pier 64 at 4:00pm followed by the *Santa Rosa & Santa Monica* at 5:00pm from Piers 57 & 58 and the *Queen of Bermuda* also at 5 but from Pier 95; then the *Nassau* departed at 6:00pm from Pier 42. The *Tarsus* was scheduled at 10:00pm from Pier 54 and finally the *Liberte* at midnight from Pier 88.



The *Liberte* but in a morning departure on a winter's day.

POSTER ART: Posters were an extremely evocative promotion of travel by ship. They prominently featured in travel agent & tourist offices. Below: A striking poster especially for new *France* in 1962.



VOYAGES: In 1955, Cunard was in the process of adding a quartet of new liners (875 passengers each in first & tourist class quarters) for its seasonal Canadian service (April-December). The first two, the *Saxonia* & *Ivernia*, would sail between Southampton, Le Havre, Quebec City and Montreal. The second pair, the *Carinthia* & *Sylvania*, would trade between Liverpool, Greenock and the two Canadian ports. Tourist class fares for the weeklong voyages were priced from \$150. Alternately, in winter when the St Lawrence was all but closed due to ice, the quartet sailed to Halifax and down to New York.



The *Saxonía* departs while the *Sylvania* remains at Pier 92, New York in this view from Dec 1960.



WINTER CRUISES: Cruises were plentiful in the winter of 1955. As an example, an 8-night cruise from New York on the *Ocean Monarch* of the Furness-Bermuda Line took in Bermuda as well as Nassau. The yacht-like ship was quite cozy – it carried only 440 passengers.



HEARD ALONG THE BOAT DECK:

60 YEARS AGO FOR THE *OCEANIC* OF 1965



Maiden arrival for the *Oceanic* at Pier 84, New York – the *Independence* in the lower left, the *Viking Princess* behind

"It was a most important ship, one of the very finest ever and, in its time, the highpoint of the great success of the Home Lines," according to Captain Mario Vespa, a Company vice president. "We designed it to do as much as 27 knots on the North Atlantic, to do Southampton to Quebec City in 5 days flat. But then, of course, the *Oceanic* became the greatest, most successful cruise ship of her time."

Built by Italy's Cantieri Riuniti dell'Adriatico at Monfalcone and practically alongside the larger *Raffaello* and then the *Eugenio "C,"* Home Lines had ordered the 1,600-passenger ship in 1960 for the final era of North Atlantic passenger service. It was planned that it would be the finest liner on the Canadian run, sailing between Cuxhaven (Hamburg), Le Havre, Southampton over to Quebec City and Montreal for about eight months of the year. In deep winter, it would cruise from New York to the Caribbean.

But by the fall of 1963, Home Lines realized Atlantic bookings were declining and so decided on year-round cruising – weekly Saturday sailings on 7-day cruises to Nassau. Such fulltime cruising and with such a large liner was a gamble.

In the end, the success of the *Oceanic* was beyond the wildest expectations of the Home Lines. In her first season, with minimum fares beginning at \$175, it was booked to 98% of capacity. While it ran her weekly cruises to the Bahamas between April and December, the ship went on longer Caribbean (10-21 days) in deep winter. The capacity was then specially reduced from 1,200 on the Nassau run to a more intimate 800. "These cruises were far more formal," remembered Len Chapman, a junior purser with Home Lines in the 1970s. "It was all top-shelf. We provided the very best service. We had 'night stewards,' for example, elderly, highly trained gentlemen who had been with Home Lines for over twenty years. The Italian service and especially the cuisine were legendary."



While there were rumors about in 1986 that the *Oceanic* might be sold to Chandris-Fantasy Cruises, it was bought in the end by Florida-headquartered Premier Cruise Lines and thereafter marketed as the *Starship Oceanic*. But after Premier collapsed into bankruptcy in 2000, the ship was sold to Spain's Pullmantur, reverted to the name *Oceanic* and ran Mediterranean as well as South American cruises. Sold again, in 2009, and this time to Japan's Peace Boat Organization, it began making educational world cruises. The forty-seven-year-old ship sailed only for another two years, however, before being sold to Chinese buyers for scrap.





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The Oceanic at Nassau – with the New Bahama Star at the bottom, the Sunward at top left



Then at New York's Pier 84 with the colorfully painted *Independence*

Off & away in 1969



In the end as the "Peace Boat"

