

Relive the Legacy With the New Queen Elizabeth

By Roy Witman

In the 1930s, Cunard Line (then White Star Line) donned the largest passenger ship ever built as the RMS Queen Elizabeth. Honoring the Queen Consort at the time, Cunard took great pride in the Queen Elizabeth who later was the namesake of the Queen Mother. However, history stepped in before the Queen Elizabeth could make her maiden voyage.

Due to turmoil at sea, it was decided the newly built Queen Elizabeth should be moved to Southampton. It came as a shock to Captain Townley when his sealed orders revealed he would be sailing the new queen to a port in New York because Southampton had recently been bombed by the Luftwaffe.

Finally, following the end of the war, Queen Elizabeth was able to fulfill her service as a passenger cruise ship. She did so until 1968 when she was sold to a group of Philadelphia businessmen who intended to operate the ship as a hotel and tourist attraction. Unfortunately, due to financial difficulties, the ship ended up being sold to a shipyard in Hong Kong. She met a most unbecoming fate as she burned and sank in a Hong Kong harbor in 1972.

The Queen Elizabeth 2

In 1967, the Queen herself launched the second ship bearing the name Elizabeth. Lovingly referred to as QE2, the Queen Elizabeth 2 became Cunard Line's longest-serving flagship. After 40 years of service, QE2 has now been sold to a company in Dubai near Saudi Arabia who has the same intentions as those who bought the original Queen Elizabeth. QE2 will now call the Persian Gulf home.

The New Queen Elizabeth Set to Launch 2010

Cunard Line announced recently that they have secured plans for a new 92,000-ton liner to reclaim the name Queen Elizabeth. Carrying 2,092 passengers and costing in excess of \$700 million, this will be the second largest Cunard ship the company has ever built.

According to Chris Marlow, president of Cunard Line, "The decision to order another ship for Cunard Line has been taken as a result of the strong booking response to the new Queen Victoria, and we are extremely pleased that Cunard will once again become a three-ship fleet so soon after the departure of the much-celebrated Queen Elizabeth 2 in November next year. Furthermore, we are delighted that Her Majesty The Queen has given her blessing to our calling this new Cunarder 'Queen Elizabeth', after our first vessel of that name."

As is with all Cunard vessels, the new Queen Elizabeth's homeport will be Southampton.

While little is known with regard to the precise specifications and amenities of Queen Elizabeth, if she is built in typical Cunard style, she'll surely have every conceivable, modern luxury that discerning passengers expect. With white glove service reminiscent of the grand days of ocean travel, it will be exciting to see what unfolds for the new Queen Elizabeth as she looks to fill the shoes of some mighty predecessors.

About the Author

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