



CUNARD

THE MOST FAMOUS OCEAN LINERS IN THE WORLD

QUEEN MARY 2

5TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

DINNER

20 OCTOBER 2009





THE LEAVING OF LIVERPOOL

Queen Mary 2 today became the largest vessel ever to sail up the River Mersey. At the same time she sailed 'home' to the birthplace of Cunard – an appropriate location to mark the Cunard flagship's fifth birthday!

From the very beginning the British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet company, universally called Cunard Line, had its Headquarters in Liverpool. Although Samuel Cunard himself was based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and latterly in London, one of his two senior partners, David McIver, to whom responsibility for day-to-day management of the company would fall, was already established as a ship manager in Liverpool. The other senior partner, George Burns, whose chief task was to oversee construction was based in Glasgow – and it was on the Clyde that the first 75 of the company's ships were built.

The company originally opened offices in 1839 at 14 Water Street, and as the business prospered and expanded it moved - in August 1857 – to premises at 8 Water Street, on the corner with Rumford Street.

8 Water Street soon became the hub of an enormous empire, concerned not just with shipping across the Atlantic to the United States and Canada, but also with routes to ports in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. By 1877 the company had 46 vessels – 19 on the Atlantic run, 12 in the Mediterranean and Black Sea services, and a further 13 serving Glasgow, Northern Ireland and Bermuda.

By this time emigration to the US had begun in earnest, and travel arrangements of amazing complexity were engineered through Cunard's Water Street office; it was possible, for example, for someone in central Europe to book with Cunard a whole journey from their home country through to California – not just the transatlantic journey, but all the rail and ferry connections required as well. And similarly, Americans had – even at that stage – developed a taste for crossing the Atlantic on a Cunard liner and, in Liverpool, transferring to a Mediterranean service Cunard ship and undertaking a Grand Tour for just £40.

Following a further half-century of steady but consistent growth into one of the notable companies of the world, Cunard was ready to construct its own magnificent landmark building – a shoreside version of its floating palaces at sea.

The Cunard Building, now one of the 'Three Graces' on Liverpool's magnificent World Heritage Site Pierhead, was built on the site of George's Dock. Work on George's Dock had begun in 1767, but by 1900 it was too small for the new generation of steamships and was closed. Divided into three sites by the extension of Water Street and Brunswick Street, it was destined to become one of the most famous waterfronts in the world.



BRITANNIA RESTAURANT

DINNER

Tuesday 20 October 2009



CANYON RANCH SPA SELECTIONS

Appetizer – Antipasti with Mozzarella, Marinated Asparagus and Olives 135/6/3 (V)

Entrée – Duck Breast with Fig Butter, Port Wine Glaze & Roasted Butternut Squash 395/14/3

Dessert – Banana Foster in Phyllo 120/3/1



APPETIZERS & SOUPS

Pâté en Croûte, Cumberland Sauce

Marinated Artichokes & Olives, Tomato Dressing

Frog's Legs Provençal

Velouté of Winter Celeriac, Preserved Lemon Confit and Black Truffle

French Onion Soup



SALADS

Mixed Greens with Aged Balsamic Dressing, Bacon and Golden Croutons

Palm Hearts & French Bean Salad on Marinated Mushrooms (V)



BRITANNIA RESTAURANT

ENTRÉES

Chicken Curry, Fragrant Basmati Rice, Poppadom, Cucumber Salad

Stuffed Seared Turbot with Sautéed Rock Shrimp, Tomato-Chilli Pesto and Artichoke Polenta

Roast Turkey, Chestnut & Apricot Stuffing, Natural Gravy

Herb & Mustard Crusted Rack of Lamb, Gratin Potato, Thyme & Port Wine Jus

Caramelized Leek & Goat's Cheese Tart, Citrus and White Truffle Oil, Mesclun Salad (V)



DESSERTS

Chocolate Marquise with Bitter Orange Coulis

Butterscotch Pie with Toffee Sauce

Queen's Pudding

Sugar-free Blossom Honey & Almond Mousse

Maple Nut and Mint Chocolate Chip Ice Creams, Vanilla Frozen Yoghurt, Cassis Sauce

Cheese Selection with Bel Paese, Roquefort, Cambozola, English Cheddar

Nutrition Key : Calories / Fat Grams / Fibre Grams (V) Indicates dishes suitable for Vegetarians



The Cunard Building was the third to be built – the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board being the first – and it was a construction on a massive scale. Built of 180,000 cu feet of Portland Stone, with 50,000 cu feet of Italian marble inside, the building's design was based on the Farnese Palace in Rome – the family home of Pope Paul III. Only much, much bigger!

The old dock walls were re-enforced with 700,000 cu feet of concrete to prevent the Mersey from seeping in, and the floor of the original dock became the floor of the lower level of two basements. Built on a huge scale – the 11 floors could accommodate 250,000 people standing – the building's huge public rooms, corridors and stairways were lavishly decorated with marble columns and arches. It was clearly the headquarters of a company that mattered.

The Cunard Empire was ruled from the fifth floor, with its Boardroom and the pivotal naval architects' department. Over 1,000 Cunard staff worked in the building, from hydrographers mapping the world's tides to the experimental chef who tried out new recipes on employees before they were unleashed on the passengers.

On the ground floor was the enormous and magnificent pillared ticket hall and lounge for First Class passengers. Second and third class passengers were dealt with in the first basement – including, for emigrants, compulsory medical examinations.

Shields on the riverside elevation acknowledge the period when the building was constructed, being the arms of countries allied in the Great War – Britain, France,

Russia, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Serbia and Montenegro. At each corner is the shield of the Cunard company, supported by an eagle – each weighing 43 tons. And above each third floor window are the arms of the principal passenger ports in the United Kingdom – Liverpool, Bristol, Southampton, Plymouth, Falmouth, Hull, Portsmouth, Newcastle, Glasgow, Leith, Aberdeen, Dundee and Queenstown.

Cunard moved into its prestigious new building, its third and last in Liverpool, in June 1916 and it remained there for over fifty years.

While the Cunard Building was perfect in every way, not just for the reassurance it gave to passengers with its air of permanence, stability and grandeur, and not just from the efficiency of having the staff on one site, but because the directors could look out from the Boardroom window and see the divisions of their empire – the ships – coming and going from the Mersey, the centre of Cunard operations.

But a significant change took place in 1936. Queen Mary, despite having Liverpool imprinted on the stern like the rest of the Cunard fleet, was too big to enter the Mersey – and she never even visited the port. She was based in Southampton, where some Cunard operations had begun in 1919, and was followed later by the even bigger Queen Elizabeth. No longer could the directors view the pride of the fleet from the Boardroom – the major shift had begun.

The Cunard Building's walls could speak of many momentous decisions and the debates that led to them; there would have been the decision to build first the



Queen Mary, and then Queen Elizabeth. Their detailed planning would have taken place within the Cunard Building as would the agonising decision to suspend construction of Queen Mary as the company's revenues collapsed in the Depression. Here Queen Elizabeth's secret dash to the USA would have been planned, and other war services coordinated.

Another major event though, was the agonising over the replacement for Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, and the eventual decision to build the truly revolutionary and epoch-making Queen Elizabeth 2.

And after that decision was taken, following nerve-racking false starts and near disasters, the Cunard Building became – along with the shipyard itself – the powerhouse of design and decision-making that led to Cunard's most successful ship ever.

But by 1967, the focus of Cunard activity had shifted away from Liverpool; it remained Cunard's administrative centre, but everything administered was elsewhere.

The biggest supplier of company revenue was the USA and the homeport for the Cunard fleet had been moving inexorably, and by now completely, to Southampton. And so, after 128 years in the city, Cunard's Head Office moved to New York in 1967 while its operational base moved to Southampton. All that remained of Cunard, housed in humbler quarters, was the cargo division. To all intents and purposes, Cunard had left home.

However, the histories of Liverpool and Cunard are interwoven and the love of the company felt by the city was never as evident as when, on Tuesday 24 July 1990, over a million lined the banks of the Mersey to welcome QE2, the first Cunard Queen to visit the river. And today, 20 October 2009, the largest Queen ever made her maiden call.

