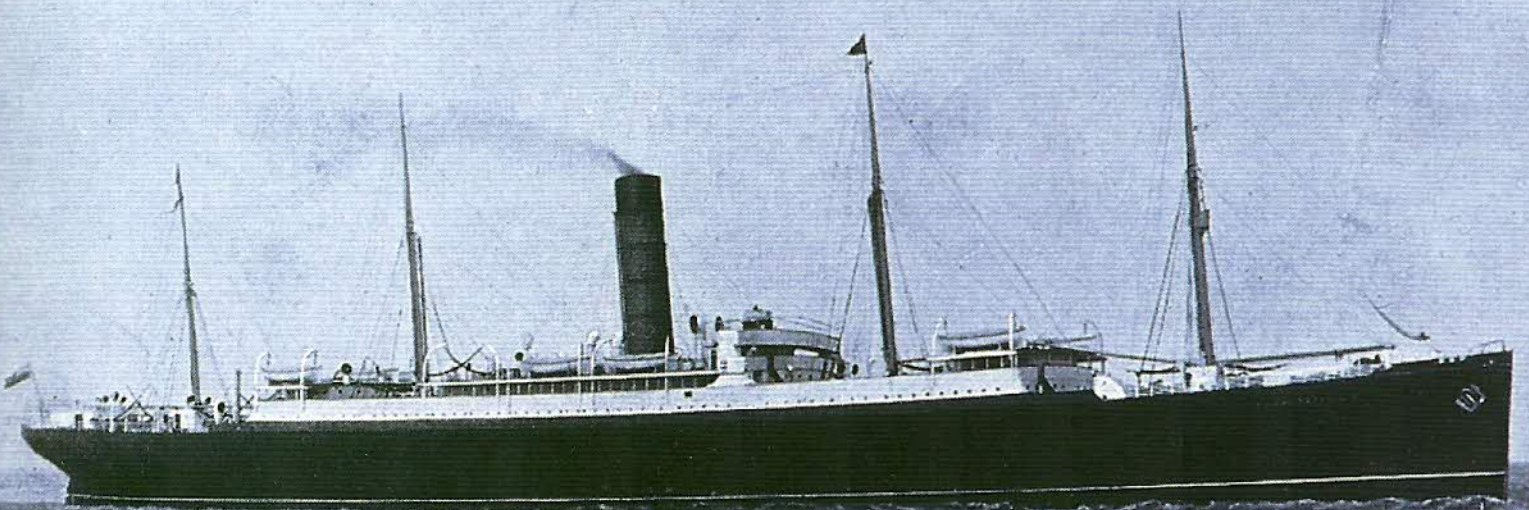




CARPATHIA
'GUIDED BY A GREATER HAND'

SUNDAY 15 APRIL 2012

COMMEMORATIVE DINNER
FOR THE ROLE PLAYED BY CARPATHIA
100 YEARS AGO IN THE RESCUE OF
ALL THE TITANIC SURVIVORS



1912-2012



GUIDED BY A GREATER HAND

*C*arpathia was a workhorse; she wasn't one of the glamorous express transatlantic liners built to compete for the Blue Riband and designed to resemble Versailles. Only once was she met by hordes of photographers with flashbulbs popping when she arrived in New York.

Built by C S Swan and Hunter at Wallsend, and launched with little fuss on 6 August 1902, the 13,603 grt Carpathia – capable of just 14 knots – was intended to carry Hungarian emigrants from the Mediterranean ports of Trieste and Fiume to New York and a new life in the United States. This role was secured in the long term for her and her fleetmates, Slavonia and Pannonia, in 1904 when Cunard was granted the Hungarian Government contract to carry emigrants, but her Maiden Voyage was from Liverpool to Boston in 1904. In November of that year she took up her Mediterranean duties, plodding backwards and forwards year in, year out, without incident, carrying emigrants westbound at a fare of £5.10s and American tourists or returning émigrés eastbound.

On Thursday 11 April 1912, Carpathia left New York almost unnoticed just after noon bound for Trieste as usual on a journey which, for momentous reasons, she would never complete. But a journey which would take her from insignificance to celebrity.

At about the same time on the other side of the Atlantic, a hugely celebrated ocean greyhound was leaving Queenstown and heading west on her Maiden Voyage to New York; she was Titanic, brand-new pride of the White Star fleet. Commanded by Captain Edward Smith, on his last voyage before retirement. Titanic had on board many rich and famous socialites, the celebrities of the day, and her departure from Southampton had been as fêted as Carpathia's had been unnoticed.

In command of the little Carpathia was 42-year-old Arthur Rostron, an officer with Cunard since 1895 and Master of Carpathia for just three months. With him were 700 passengers, 150 of them elderly American tourists and most of the rest former emigrants making a visit home.

At 12.15am on the morning of 15 April Carpathia's wireless operator Harold Cottam was in the process of untying his shoes in readiness for bed. He was ten minutes later than he normally would be in turning in, and providentially his ear phones were still clamped to his head; had he not been, and had they had not been, there would not have been so many Titanic survivors.

On receiving the first SOS from Titanic at 12.15am, Cottam raised Captain Rostron who had already retired for the night, and Rostron in turn rose to the challenge of his first maritime emergency with impeccable practical thoroughness.

After a brief moment of disbelief in which he quizzed Cottam about the certainty of his seemingly preposterous claim that Titanic was in distress, Rostron immediately ordered a change of course. Carpathia was 58 miles from Titanic; at 14 knots it would take her over four hours to get there.

The Chief Engineer was ordered to turn off all the heat and hot water so that every ounce of steam could be used to drive the engines. All off duty stokers were raised from their beds to shovel coal into the furnaces as fast as they were able.

Next, Rostron ordered his First Officer to begin specific preparations – the lifeboats were to be slung out, lighting rigged along the ship's sides, all shell doors were opened in readiness, and slings made to haul up the children and the infirm, ladders and rigging lowered, and the ship's forward cargo cranes made ready to lift aboard luggage, belongings and lifeboats.

Meanwhile, all remaining crew were summoned to duty and preparations were made to receive 2,000 Titanic passengers in the public rooms; blankets and warm clothing were gathered to distribute, tea, coffee and soup prepared.

First aid points were established in the three dining rooms, with a doctor in charge of each. When all was ready, the ever-thoughtful Rostron ordered his crew to take hot coffee in preparation for the long night ahead.

The ship, meanwhile, strained and shuddered as she edged past her maximum speed as every stoker shovelled coal into the furnaces; fifteen, sixteen and finally seventeen knots were achieved as the ship surged through the dark, without radar, past glistening icebergs visible to the lookouts only by the reflection of the stars.



At 4am Carpathia reached Titanic's position and Carpathia's engines were stopped as the crew, together with many passengers now on deck having been alerted both by the hustle of preparations and the increasing cold in their quarters, strained to see some sign of the ship. Suddenly, they saw a green flare fired by Titanic's lifeboat number 2 – and the first survivors came aboard at 4.10am; by 8.30am Charles Lightoller, Titanic's Second Officer, the final person to be rescued stepped aboard Carpathia.

Now carrying double her original complement of passengers, Carpathia steamed slowly among wreckage and icebergs seeking more survivors – but none was found.

Rostron's next decision was where to go: Halifax was nearest, but the passage would involve travelling through much ice and he felt the Titanic's survivors had had enough of that; the Azores would have been the best destination to keep Carpathia on course and incur the least cost to Cunard, but the ship had insufficient supplies for such a journey with such greater numbers; so Rostron headed back whence he had come – New York.

Carpathia's passengers and crew did what they could, giving up beds and clothing to those who had survived near-freezing temperatures often inadequately dressed; but for many inconsolable widows nothing could be done save allow them to cry themselves out.

Carpathia was besieged by calls from the press, which Rostron ordered were to be ignored, and when she finally arrived in New York on the morning of 18 April she was accompanied up river by reporters in hired tugboats shouting questions through megaphones; never had Carpathia been the centre of so much attention.

Eventually she berthed at 9.30am at Pier 54, from which she had set out just seven days earlier.

Though much praised and decorated for his calm and exemplary actions Rostron was reluctant to speak publicly about the Titanic disaster, and the references in his autobiography 'Home from the Sea' published after retirement were self-effacing and devoid of sensation. But in response to a journalist querying many years later how the little ship could have been coerced to travel at a speed greater than the maximum of which she was supposedly capable, and how she had progressed safely at such speed through ice in the dark, the deeply religious Rostron simply replied "A hand other than mine was on the wheel that night".

The now-famous Carpathia returned to her Mediterranean duties until 1915 when she was taken up for war service carrying essential supplies from New York to Liverpool.

But, just four months before the Armistice was signed, while in convoy from Liverpool to New York, Carpathia was torpedoed three times by U55 on 17 July 1918 just 120 miles south west of Ireland. Two and a half hours later she sank, with the loss of five crew members killed by an explosion. 275 survivors were picked up and landed safely at Liverpool.

Like so many others, Carpathia's days were ended by a wartime torpedo; but unlike them, the little ship from the Tyne will always be remembered for her part in a night of tragedy and heroism.





DINNER



ROYAL SPA SELECTIONS

Tuna Carpaccio with White Miso Sauce

Macadamia Crusted Red Snapper with Caramelised Pineapple Jus, Wild Rice and Stir-fried Bok Choy

French Apple Tart



APPETISERS AND SOUPS

Symphony of Seafood with Hot Smoked Salmon, Seafood Quenelle and Shrimp Salad*

Chicken and Wild Mushroom Terrine, Tarragon Foam

Escargots à la Bourguignonne in Garlic Herb Butter

Cream of Tomato Soup with Basil Cream (V)

Game Consommé Diane



SALADS

Green Oak Leaf and Boston Salad, Sun-blushed Tomatoes, Red Radish, Sherry Vinaigrette (V)

Caesar Salad with Shaved Parmesan, Croutons, Chicken Tenders and Anchovies



ENTREES

Lobster Thermidor, Truffled Mash Potato, Asparagus Spears, Tomato Confit

Roasted Duck à L'Orange, Hazelnut Croquettes and Grand Marnier Sauce

Châteaubriand, Larded Peas, Mushroom Turn-over and Gratin Dauphinoise Potatoes, Bernaise Sauce

Crab and Crayfish Ravioli with Shellfish Burro Fusso, Cognac and Parmesan Cream

Melanzana Parmigiano, Garlic and Herb Crostini (V)

Caramelised Onion Tarte Tatin, Roquefort Cheese Bavarois with Arugula and Tomato Salad (V)



DESSERTS

Strawberry and Caramel Brûlée Cheese Cake

White Chocolate Parfait with Lime Zest and Honey

Baked Alaska with Morello Cherries

Sugar-free Blackberry Clafoutis

Cookies and Cream, Vanilla, Ice Creams and Raspberry Sorbet

Cheese Selection with, Wensleydale with Cranberry, Gouda, Gruyère and Saint-Paulin

(V) Denotes vegetarian choice

Whilst all the food we serve on board is prepared to the highest health and safety standards, Public Health Services have determined that eating uncooked or partially cooked meats, poultry, fish, eggs, milk and shellfish may increase your risk of foodborne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions.

These menu items are individually marked by an asterisk.*

Please note that some of these dishes may contain nuts or nut extracts.



COMMODORE SIR ARTHUR ROSTRON, KBE, CBE, RD, RNR (1869 – 1940)

*B*y accident of history Arthur Rostron is, without doubt, the most celebrated Cunard Captain in the company's history.

Born near Bolton in Lancashire he joined the naval school ship HMS Conway in 1884 at the age of 15. After two years training he joined the Waverley Line's iron clipper ship, Cedric the Saxon, as an apprentice – rising to acting third mate. Following time on the barques Red Gauntlet and Camphill, he returned to Cedric the Saxon as Chief Officer. Less than a year after he left Cedric in 1895 to join Cunard Line, the ship disappeared and no trace of her has ever been found.

He joined Cunard as fourth officer on the express transatlantic liner Umbria before transferring to Aurania as third officer and in 1907 to Lusitania as Chief Officer.

Rostron's first command also came in 1907 when he was posted to the Brescia, a small mail and cargo vessel. This was in accordance with standard Cunard practice whereby for their first command officers were transferred from the glamorous transatlantic superliners, and made to work their way up through more humble vessels.

Captain Rostron's appointment with history was fixed when, in 1912, he was made master of Carpathia – another small workhorse built to carry Hungarian emigrants from Trieste to a new life in the United States.

Just three months after his appointment, on 15 April 1912 as Carpathia was on her usual route out of New York back to the Mediterranean, distress calls were received from White Star's Titanic. Despite never having dealt with an

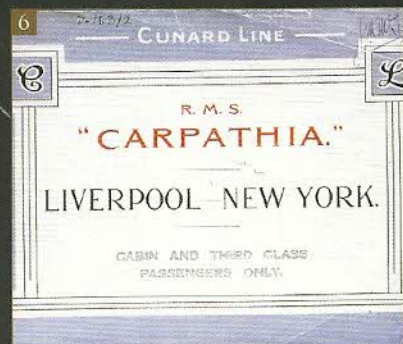
emergency at sea before, Rostron calmly and meticulously made preparations to receive survivors on board. He thought of everything. And he pushed his little ship at speeds of which she was supposedly incapable through the ice in the dark to the spot where Titanic had sunk. Carpathia picked up all the survivors and returned to New York. Rostron was a hero – and later awarded the Congressional Gold Medal and the American Cross of Honor. A deeply religious man, he himself was modest about his role, saying that "a hand other than mine was on the wheel that night".

The peacetime captaincy of Caronia, Carmania, Campania and Lusitania followed, and during the First World War he commanded Alaunia during the Battle of Gallipoli, before transferring to Mauretania. He was awarded the CBE in 1918 in recognition of his war service. For ten years he remained in command of Mauretania, a position he held when he was knighted in 1926. In 1928 he became Commodore of the Cunard fleet, and transferred to the command of Berengaria.

Following his retirement, Commodore Rostron was invited to board his favourite ship, Mauretania, as she was about to leave Southampton for the breaker's yard in July 1935. Overcome with emotion, he refused to do so and waved her farewell from the quayside.

Commodore Rostron died in 1940 and is buried in the West End Church, Southampton.

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DETAILS OF IMAGES IN THIS MENU

- 1 (and front cover) Carpathia
- 2 Titanic survivors being brought aboard Carpathia
- 3 Titanic survivors on the deck of Carpathia
- 4 Titanic survivors on the deck of Carpathia
- 5 Carpathia Crew
- 6 Cover of a Carpathia Cabin and Third Class booklet
- 7 Commodore Arthur Rostron KBE, CBE, RD, RNR



CUNARD