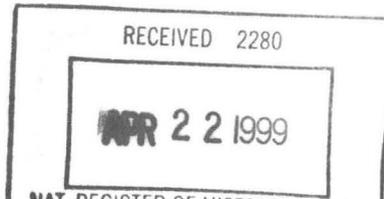


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in "How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name STEAMSHIP (S.S.) UNITED STATES

other names/site number U S MARITIME COMMISSION No. 2917

2. Location

street & number Pier 82 N/A not for publication

city or town Philadelphia N/A vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Philadelphia code 101 zip code 19148

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Bernt D. Lums Exec. Dir 3/10/99
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
PA Historical and Museum Commission
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Carol Shull June 3, 1999

Name of Property

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
1	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	_____	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION-WATER-RELATED

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: OCEAN LINER

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls

roof

other STEEL & ALUMINUM

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Description

The Steamship UNITED STATES is an Ocean Liner, completed in 1952 who's gross tonnage is 53,329 tons, length overall of 990 feet with the length at the waterline of 916.8 feet. The width of the ship is 101.6 feet. The interior consists of 12 decks. Her height is 175 feet the from keel to the top of the smoke stack. The designer was William Francis Gibbs of Gibbs and Cox, and built as hull number 488 by Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company at Newport News Virginia. Her official US Government-Maritime Administration Number is 2917 and her documentation number is 263934. The ship's quadruple turbine power plant is rated at over 242,000 horsepower. She is currently moored at pier 82 in Philadelphia. The exterior is exactly as built with the exception that the lifeboats and corresponding davits have been removed.

As built in 1952 the UNITED STATES is a passenger liner capable of carrying 2,000 passengers and 1,000 crew. The hull is constructed of high tensile steel hull plates with the majority of the hull welded. Riveting is used half the length amidships with the butt ends being welded. Longitudinal framing provides the strength for the hull without the weight of traditional transverse framing. There are 366 frames utilized within the hull of the ship. Promenade Deck is the strength deck of one inch thick steel providing the covering for the top of the hull and completes the top of the "box". The hull has been best described as a hollow girder that has the great ability to take punishment and flex without damage. The hull of the UNITED STATES is long and fine with a length to width ratio of 10 to 1. The under body of the hull tapers from amidships to both the bow and stern with very little of the ships cutaway being a box like most other ships. The four propeller shafts are surrounded by nacelles for streamlining and strength. The underwater portion of the bow has a slight bulbous bulb to create efficiency through the water.

There are two large cargo holds forward which descend 8 decks, used for general cargo and automobiles. Aft there are two smaller holds, utilized for mail and baggage, which descend 6 and 7 decks. The forward and aft engine room each have a hatch that provides access from Sun Deck down to the appropriate engine room. Engineers who would normally be housed on Sun and Sports Deck had private elevators and stairs available which lead directly to the engine and boiler rooms. Each of the boiler rooms have hatches containing catwalks which lead to the top of the smoke stacks.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Description (continued)

The UNITED STATES is powered by 4 Westinghouse two stage steam turbines. Each turbine set consists of a High Pressure stage (HP) and Low Pressure (LP) stage. Each turbine set is capable of producing over 62,000 horsepower. The turbines are connect to double reduction gearing, which in turn are connected to the propeller shaft. Each of the shafts drive either a four or five bladed propeller 18 feet in diameter. The two shafts from the forward engine room exceed 400 feet in length. The machinery is arranged in separate rooms, there are two boiler rooms, two engine rooms and two auxiliary engine rooms. Starting directly below the forward smoke stack is the forward boiler room which contains 4 boilers, the feed pumps and a steam turbo-generator. The forward engine room is the next room aft, containing two turbine sets for the outboard 4 bladed propellers, two more turbo-generators and electrical switchboards. Continuing aft is the forward auxiliary engine room containing air conditioning equipment, and fresh water evaporators. The next section of the ship was dedicated to the refrigeration storage area. Then directly below the aft smoke stack there starts a similar set of boiler, engine and auxiliary engine rooms for the inboard 5 bladed propellers.

Other auxiliary equipment areas are the aft line handling room located on Main deck. The emergency generators are located aft on promenade deck and under the forward smoke stack. Anchor windlass equipment is forward on Main deck with the chain equipment on Upper deck forward. Steering room is far aft on A deck. Located behind the Bridge are the Chart Room, Damage Control Room, Captains and Harbor Pilots sea cabin. The Radio Room is located on Sports Deck. There were 24 Lifeboats, 22 are 38 feet long with two rescue boats 24 feet in length.

The UNITED STATES carried three classes of passengers, First , Cabin and Tourist. Passengers and crew utilized public rooms and were housed in staterooms and dormitories on D, C, B, A, Main, Upper, Promenade, Sun and Sports Decks. Promenade Deck was devoted exclusively to large Public areas. For the First Class passenger there was the Ballroom, Theatre (also Cabin Class), Navajo Lounge, Private Restaurant, Smoking Room, Observation Lounge ,Writing Room, Library, Shopping Center and the enclosed Promenade Deck. The Tourist Class Lounge, Writing Room and Theatre were also housed on this deck. All three Dining Saloon's were located on A Deck. The First Class Dining Saloon and Cabin Class Dining Saloon made use of the same galley. The Tourist Class Dining room had its own separate galley. The swimming pool located on C deck was the only public area open to all three classes of passengers. In addition there are a total of 18 elevators. Other public rooms included lounges, smoking rooms, children's playrooms, libraries, writing rooms, barber shops, beauty parlors and a gym. There were several foyers which housed the various passenger services such as the pursers office and travel office for each class.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

SS UNITED STATES

Philadelphia, PA

Description (continued)

The materials used in the interior were mostly steel for structural members and fire bulkheads. Aluminum was used for some interior walls but almost all interior walls for the public rooms, staterooms, crews quarters, stairwells etc was made of a lightweight fireproof wallboard called marinite. All decoration on board was fireproof, mostly constructed in tasteful fashion, of aluminum, glass, and glass fiber. All built in interior furniture was custom crafted of aluminum, glass and fireproof fabrics. Railings and all light fixtures was also constructed of aluminum.

The integrity of the UNITED STATES today is very much as originally built with the following exceptions: All interiors walls constructed of marinite and all interior appointments and equipment have been removed. The interior currently resembles the ship while she was being constructed before all the staterooms and public rooms were added. The interior is in excellent condition still covered with the original yellow primer with many of the original construction markings visible. None of the steel or aluminum, ceiling supports, stairwells and other structural supports have been removed. However, all asbestos has been removed. All engineering areas are intact with original equipment such as the turbines, boilers, generators, condensers, evaporators, anchor windlass equipment etc. Lifeboats and corresponding davits and equipment are now missing, the only alteration that has taken place to the structure of the ship. The hull was cleaned and painted several years ago and found to be in excellent condition. Topside is in need of paint but the basic structure is in very good condition. The structure and engineering areas of the ship for which it is historically significant have not been altered during the life of the ship and she still retains all the features for which she is known for.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1952

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

William Francis Gibbs

President of Gibbs & Cox

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Personal Collection

P William DiBenedetto
John DeVenny

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Statement of Significance

The SS UNITED STATES is eligible under Criterion C for Engineering for its innovative hull design, safety features, and power train and as an important work of prominent ship ship designers Gibbs & Cox. Launched in 1952 the SS UNITED STATES meets Criteria Consideration G as an exceptionally significant resource that has achieved significance within the past fifty years.

Historical background and significance:

The SS UNITED STATES is historically significant as being the largest, fastest, safest and most technologically advanced ocean liner ever built in this country and perhaps the world. She was the greatest achievement for the career of William Francis Gibbs, one of this country's most respected Naval Architects of this century. She was and still is the fastest ocean liner in the world and captured the record for the fastest passage across the Atlantic Ocean during her maiden voyage, July 3, 1952 thru July 14, 1952. She is one of the most powerful ships ever built including naval vessels.

The success of the QUEEN MARY, QUEEN ELIZABETH, ILE DE FRANCE and other large liners as troopships during World War II allowed Gibbs to convince the US Government, and the US Navy that a fast superliner that could be converted into a troopship was a good idea. United States Lines looking to replace pre war tonnage, did not need much convincing. Her initial construction cost of \$79.5 Million was paid for by; the US Government-Maritime Administration \$19.5 million, the US Navy \$25 million and United States Lines \$25 million. United States Lines was the official owner who operated her during her 17 year service life.

Discussions between all the interested parties started right after World War II with the final design stage beginning during 1948. The new ship was to have and be the best in every respect; safest afloat, with ability to stay afloat with a large amount of damage. She was to be fireproof, have the ability to still move under her own power with one of her boiler/engine rooms inoperable. She was to have a very large cruising range with the fuel carried aboard and to be a comfortable superliner carrying passengers back and forth from the United States to

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Statement of Significance (continued)

Europe. Her troopship capability was to allow the conversion from 2,000 passengers to carrying 14,000 troops in 48 hours.

Construction started on February 8, 1950 in Newport News Virginia. Gibbs insisted that the new ship be built in a drydock to prevent damage during launch but the real reason was to prevent anyone from learning any secrets about HIS ship! William Francis made sure any press releases, photographs or any other information relating to the UNITED STATES, released to the public, was approved by himself. Virtually no information about the powerplant or hull was released. Construction proceeded rapidly due to large amounts of pre-fabrication that were used. The launch was simply filling the drydock with water from the James River, with the naming ceremony taking place on June 23, 1951. Sea trials were held in May and June 1952 and only minor corrections were required by the new owners. She began her sailing career in July 1952 by smashing the record for the fastest trans-Atlantic voyage both east and westbound. The UNITED STATES spent her service life on the Atlantic run from New York City to Southampton, England with stops at Le Havre, France and Bremerhaven, Germany. Occasionally she did Caribbean cruises during the winter. She was well patronized by passengers until being laid up in Norfolk during November 1969.

She had been operating in the red since the late 1950's. The introduction of the jet, strikes by the crew and the imminent lost of US Government subsidies sealed her fate. Still in layup, during 1973 she was sold by United States Lines back to the Maritime Administration for the remaining mortgage amount. The US Navy did a study to convert the UNITED STATES into a Hospital Ship but decided other ships would be cheaper to convert. The ship was for sale but there were no takers until US Cruises Inc bought the ship for \$5 million, during 1980, for use as a Cruise Ship around Hawaii. During 1984 an auction was held selling off most of the interior appointments such as art work, furniture, dishes, silver, glasses, railings etc. Anything that was not to be used in the planned refit in Germany. Financial problems prevented anymore activity towards the planned conversion. During 1989 the UNITED STATES was evicted from her Norfolk pier and moved to a CSX coal pier in Newport News Virginia. Less than one mile from where she was built.

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Section number 8 Page 6

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Statement of Significance (continued)

During April 1992 she was sold at auction for \$2.6 million, to Mamara Marine, for unpaid bills. She was towed to Istanbul, Turkey to be renovated into a Cruise ship by her new owners. During December 1993 she was moved to Sevastopol, Ukraine for the entire interior of marinite to be removed along with all asbestos in the engineering areas. During July 1996 she was towed from Turkey to Philadelphia Pa. to be converted into a Cruise Ship. November 1997 she was again sold at auction to Edward A Cantor, holder of the mortgage. Plans still call to make use of the ship as a Cruise Ship or perhaps a floating hotel.

The remarkable story of the SS UNITED STATES began in Philadelphia during the late 1880's with William Francis Gibbs. During November of 1894, at the young age of eight, he attended the launch of the ST LOUIS at the shipyard of Wm. Cramp & Sons, Philadelphia. It was from that moment that William Francis Gibbs dedicated his life to ships. In the background he had a quiet younger brother, Frederic H. who was to share his dream and become his financial and business partner for the adventure into the 20th Century. The turn of the Century brought about great advances in marine design and propulsion. William Francis followed every development with intense interest. Both he and his brother Frederic traveled on the White Star Liners OCEANIC and CELTIC, two of the largest liners in the world at that time. Later in 1907 they traveled on both the LUSITANIA and the MAURETANIA, exploring and investigating them to learn all they could about these new Ocean Liners.

During his early schooling he surrounded himself with technical manuals, engineering publications and books about ships and machinery. His formal education led him to become an attorney in deference to his father, but at the same time, followed his dedication and taught himself all aspects of ship design. William Francis had a dream of building two 1,000 foot liners that would be larger and faster than the two speed queens LUSITANIA and MAURETANIA. This idea was presented to Mr Franklin the President of International Mercantile Marine, who then got approval and support from it famous owner, J.P. Morgan.

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Section number 8 Page 7

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Statement of Significance (continued)

This team was able to convince the US Shipping Board and the Navy to support the project of building two 1,000 foot liners capable of 30 knots+. In 1919 the New York Times published a large article dedicated to describing the plans for these two large liners. However, the National Depression put a hold on these plans, but Gibbs never gave up his dream of a 1,000 foot superliner.

One of William Francis Gibbs most famous projects was the conversion of the former German Ocean Liner VATERLAND into the US liner LEVIATHAN. When he tried to obtain the plans, for the LEVIATHAN, from the ships builders Blohm & Voss the price of \$1,000,000 was far to high. Gibbs then undertook the task of redrawing the plans of the LEVIATHAN from scratch. He succeeded in completing this project which established the Gibbs brothers as leaders in ship design. Eventual projects included liners such as the MALOLO of 1927, SANTA PAULA, SANTA LUCIA, SANTA ROSA of 1932, AMERICA of 1938. the yachts SAVARONA, ALVA and HUSSAR(still in service as the SEA CLOUD). He also designed Cruisers, Destroyers, LST'S, Tugs, Tankers, Minesweepers and other ships for the US NAVY before and after World War II. The famous New York fireboat FIREFIGHTER came from the Gibbs drawing boards. The final, great achievement for William Francis was the SS UNITED STATES. She represented the culmination of a life-long career and the fulfillment of a life's ambition to create one of the best built, safest and fastest Superliners ever created.

William Francis Gibbs incorporated all the best ideas of ship design into the SS UNITED STATES. He used years of experience and technical knowledge to use new ideas and innovations in his wonder ship, the ship he had been planning to build for most of his life. Her cost at \$79 million was more than double any other liner built to date. All the additional costs being associated with craftsmanship, safety and design innovation.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Statement of Significance (continued)

One of the first areas that he used a new technology was in the area of propulsion. Gibbs had tried for years to convince the US Navy to use high temperature and high pressure steam in the ships he designed for them. The US Navy was content to keep their steam plants at 600 psi, including the IOWA class battleships. Several converted experimental ships had proven the technology of 1,000 degree 1,000 psi steam turbine propulsion plants. The SS UNITED STATES was the first ship to have this technology installed while she was being built, thus setting the trend for the nuclear powered aircraft carriers of today. Interestingly, her eight boilers are capable of producing more steam than her giant turbines can handle.

As she was to be a Navy Auxiliary all critical areas of the ship were duplicated, including the propulsion plant. There were two engine rooms and two boiler rooms each separated by a watertight bulkhead. Cross piping allowed many different boiler/turbine combinations. In regular trans-Atlantic service only 6 boilers, out of the 8, on board were used at any one time and then only at 60 percent capacity.

The propellers William Francis chose to use are eighteen feet in diameter, 4 bladed props on her forward shafts and 5 bladed props on the aft shafts. The 4 bladed propellers acted as a sort of overdrive and the combination helped to reduce vibration. There have been many statements about her true speed during her sea trials in 1952, figures have been quoted from 38 knots to over 45 knots. Her official speed on the trials was 38.32 knots. One of the engineers during the trials stated that she actually achieved an incredible 44.7 knots. He also stated that the tremendous vibration caused his cup of coffee to bounce across the engine room log table! There were two rpm ratings; actual turbine rpm maximum at merchant rating was 4,294 RPM, the Navy rating was 5,240 RPM. With all this data it becomes quite apparent that even when she won the Blue Ribbon, for the fastest transatlantic crossing, from the Queen Mary she was not running anywhere near her top capability. In fact, while in passenger service she would only use about 108,000 shp against her trial horsepower of over 242,000 shp. Quite simply the SS UNITED STATES is the most powerful merchant ship ever built

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Statement of Significance (continued)

and quite likely will remain so. Even today she would rival the Nuclear Aircraft Carriers in horsepower produced.

William Francis also designed duplication in key control systems on the ship. On the bridge there were four engine order telegraphs each were dual read to ensure the signals got to the engine rooms. The steering system had three helms. There were two manual helms, one located on the Bridge and the other on the aft docking bridge. The main helm on the bridge was part of a automatic steering system attached to the latest design of the Sperry Auto Gryo Compass. This allowed the ship to maintain a steady course with little human intervention. The two emergency generators were located on the promenade deck and beneath the forward smokestack to ensure they would operate to the last moment in the event the ship was sinking.

The next area of innovation was the hull and superstructure design. The UNITED STATES was longitudinally framed, rather than transverse like the other major liners of the time. This gave greater strength for the same weight of hull. The length(990 ft) to width(101.5 ft) ratio of 10 to one, made the hull design very fine and efficient through the water. The ship was designed to be a four compartment ship, while her best competitors were two and three compartment ships. This meant she would stay afloat with any four adjoining compartments flooded including the engine and boiler rooms.

In order to save weight and reduce the ships displacement, Gibbs opted to use aluminum for the superstructure, except for the front which was constructed of steel. This was the largest amount of aluminum ever used on any man made object at that time. Over 2,000 tons of aluminum was used. Masts, funnels, lifeboats, oars and davits were also constructed of aluminum. One of the problems William Francis had to overcome was the reaction between the dissimilar metals of steel and aluminum. Special insulation was used between the two metals then stainless steel rivets were used to attach them. Gibbs would inspect the ship the

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Statement of Significance (continued)

remainder of his life to ensure that his idea was successful. All the materials were the finest, such as non corrosive cupro-nickle, which was used for the most of the piping on board. The swimming pool was constructed of lightweight monel (metal) instead of the usual tile. His ideas are still used today in the construction of modern cruise ships.

Gibbs was obsessed with fireproofing and insisted that no wood or flammable material be used in the ships construction. There was some wood on the ship, such as the piano, butchers block, cork insulation and other small uses on board. All fabrics were treated to be fire retardant. Special nonflammable paint was used for the entire ship. All of the furniture used such as chairs, tables, lamps, dressers and bed frames were specially constructed of aluminum. All the artwork was made of nonflammable materials such as aluminum, glass and glass foam. Railings both inside and out were aluminum. The Decks were steel or aluminum covered by a rubber like material called neotech. Even the deck chairs were constructed of heavy weight aluminum. All interior walls that were not made of steel or aluminum were constructed of marinite, a lightweight fireproof wallboard. Unlike many other ships the electrical system was completely insulated from the hull to prevent short circuits which could result in fires. Steel fire bulkheads were arranged approximately every 110 feet on each deck. Because of all the safety and strength designs there were no large unbroken vistas that existed on other previous superliners. Gibbs was determined that catastrophies that destroyed other great liners such as the NORMANDIE, MORROW CASTLE and others would not take place on his wonder ship. The Damage Control Room adjoining the Bridge contained all the latest safety monitoring systems including fire detectors and the water tight compartment door controls.

The most important fact about the SS UNITED STATES was that she was built as a ultra safe and fast transportation vehicle to carry 3,000 passengers and crew between the United States and Europe. She did this with remarkable efficiency. As a troopship she could carry 14,000 troops, 12,000 miles without refueling. It is a well known fact that she captured the Blue Ribbon for the fastest Atlantic crossing on her maiden voyage during July 1952, beating the previous record by over 10 hours. The UNITED STATES had great appeal to passengers and became the most popular super liner on the Atlantic for many years. She carried many famous passenger such as the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, John Wayne, President Truman, President Eisenhower, Marlyn Monre, Queen Frederika of Greece,

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Statement of Significance (continued)

Princess Grace Kelly, Joseph Kennedy, President Kennedy, President Clinton, Bob Hope, Joan Crawford, Rita Hayworth, President Tubman of Liberia and many others. The list reads as a who's who of rich and famous people. She carried the regular passenger in great comfort and style in First, Cabin, and Tourist Class. Even Tourist Class got to enjoy being served in nicely decorated public rooms with fine silver.

The UNITED STATES is one of the best examples of American Shipbuilding skill which had its roots several hundred years ago, from primitive sloops of the 18th century, to the graceful clipper ships of the 19th century, to the innovative SS UNITED STATES of the 20th century. She was the largest passenger vessel ever built in this country. She was the most powerful merchant ship ever built and rivals the most powerful naval vessels. The first ever to incorporate vast quantities of aluminum in ship construction. Dual engineering and operating systems were incorporated for reliability and safety. Only the best materials were used in her construction. The SS UNITED STATES is certainly one of the finest ships ever built.

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Section number 9 Page 12

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

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1075 1070

SS UNITED STATES
Name of Property

Philadelphia, PA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.5

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 4 88 30 0 44 18 45 0
Zone Easting Northing
2

3
Zone Easting Northing
4

Verbal Boundary Description

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title P William DiBenedetto/President

organization SS UNITED STATES PRESERVATION SOCIETY date June 6, 1998

street & number 10104 Earthstone Court telephone 919-517-2021

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27615

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Edward A. Cantor

street & number 1203 West Saint Georges Ave. telephone 108-925-6650

city or town Linden state NJ zip code 07036

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 13

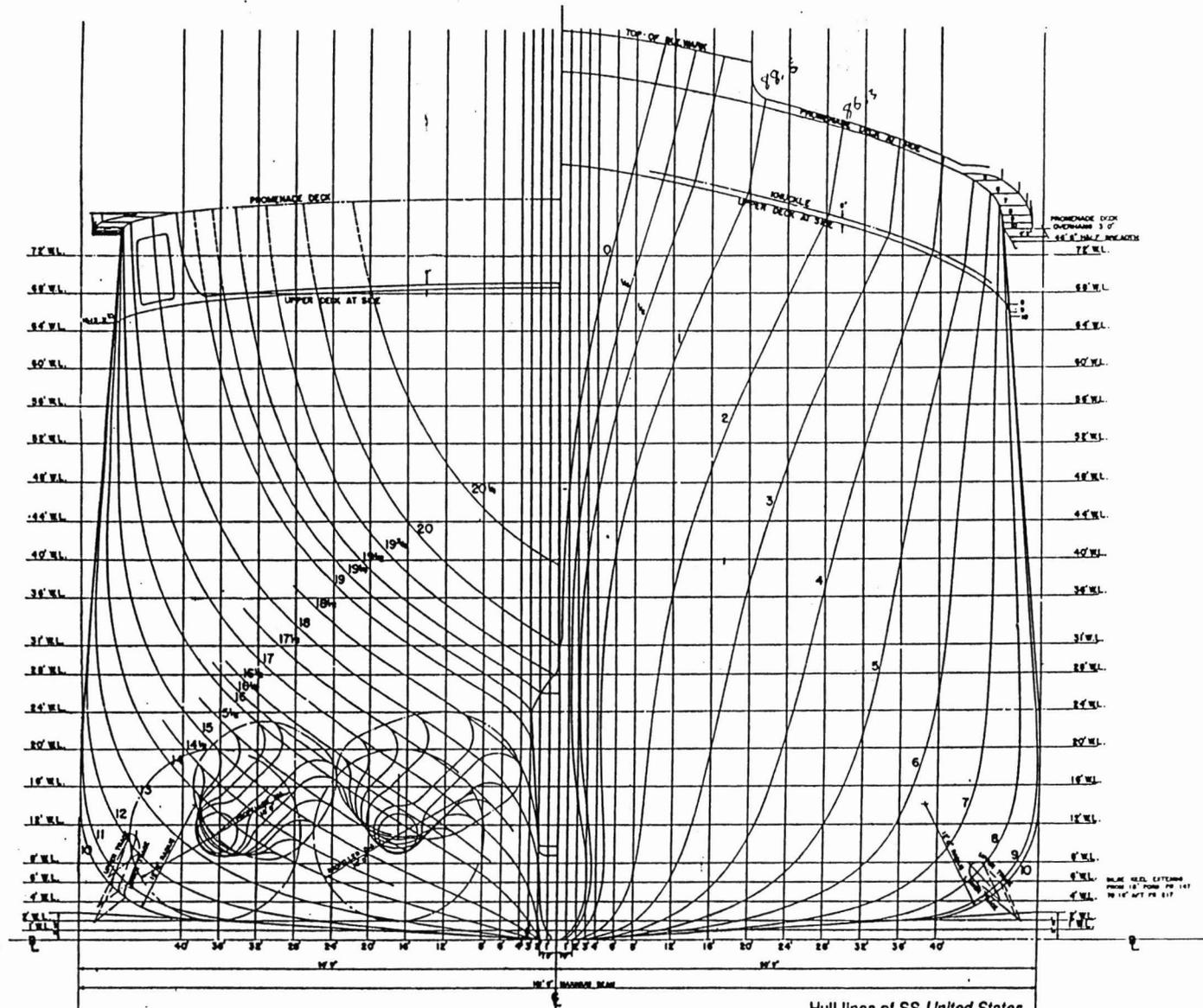
SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA

Verbal Boundary Description

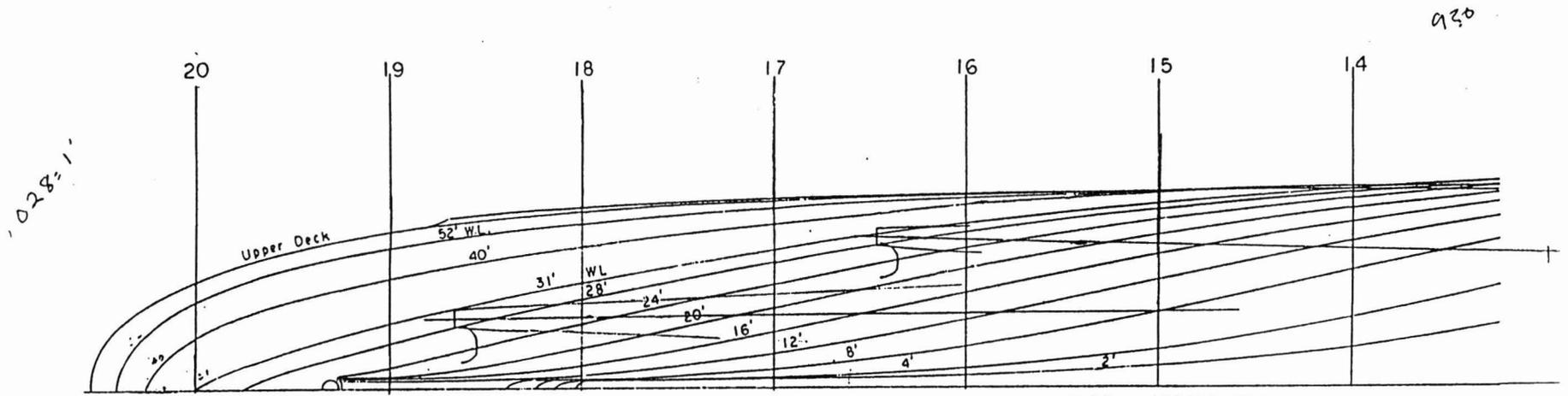
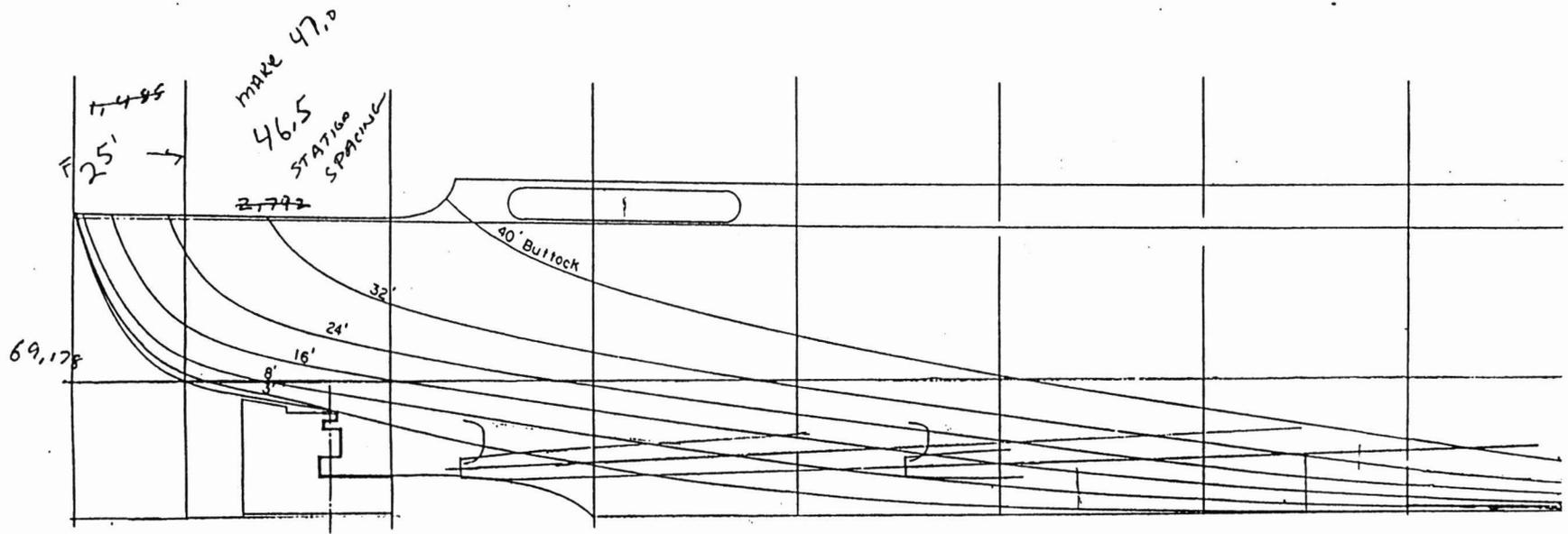
The Ship at berth at Pier 82

Boundary Justification

The selected boundary includes the ship and there are no associated resources which have been excluded from the boundary.

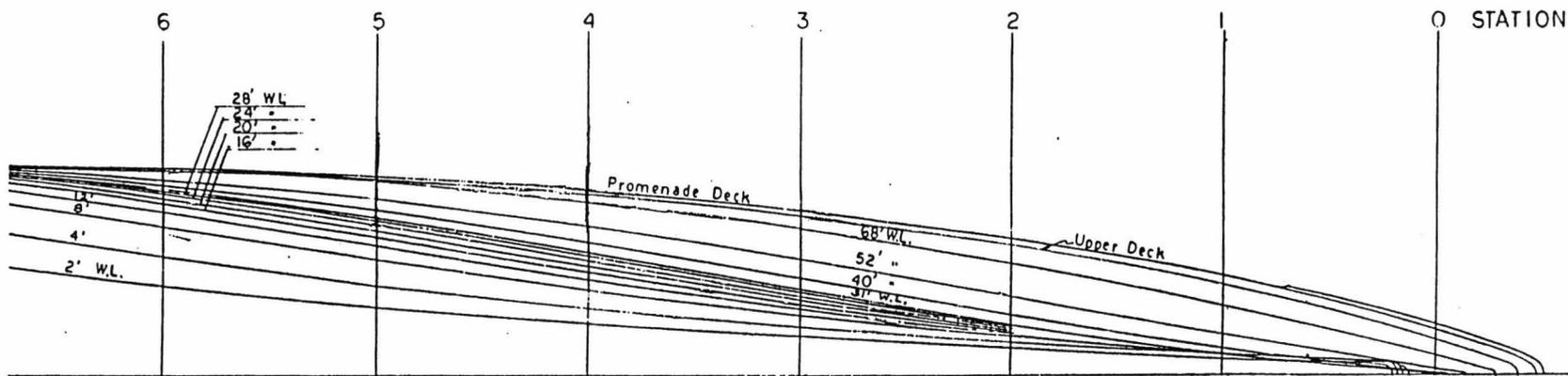
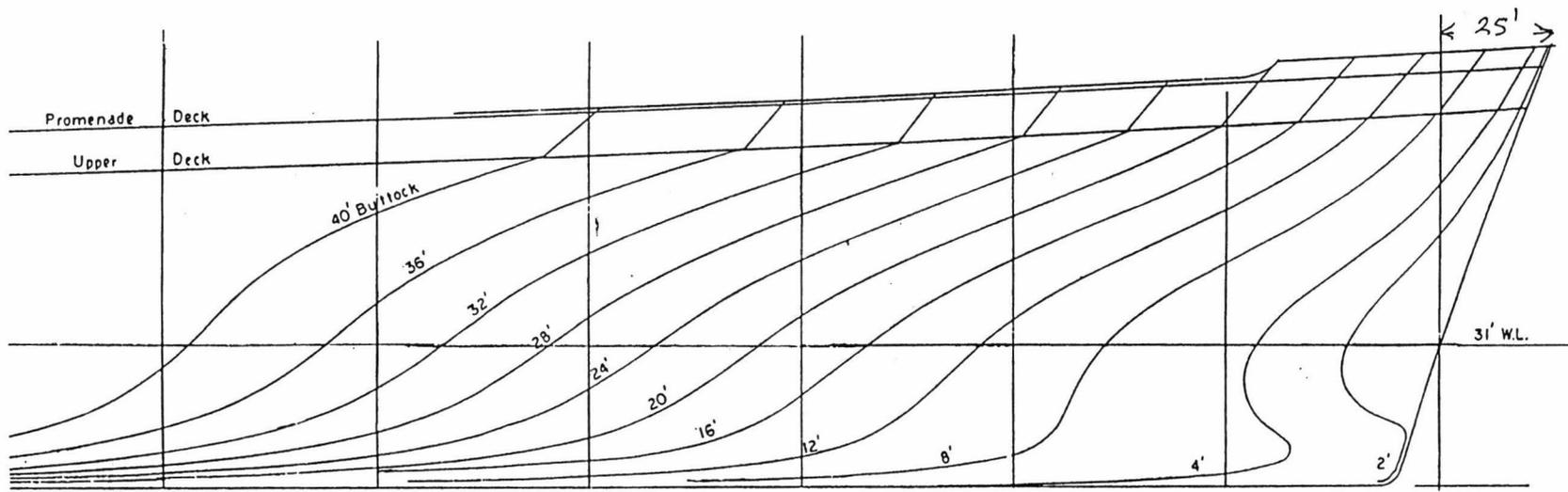


Hull lines of SS *United States*
from builder's faired mold loft



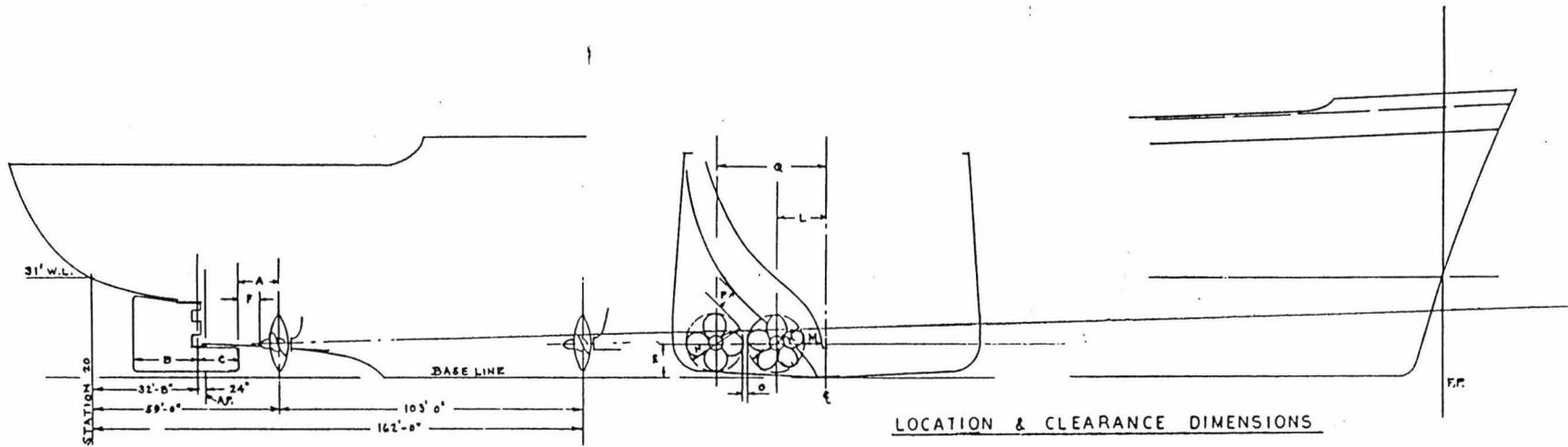
Hull lines of SS United States
from bulder's faired mold loft
offsets

Fig. 1(a) Sheer and half-breadth plans (foreshortened to fit in page)



Hull lines of SS United States
from builder's faired mold loft
offsets

Fig. 1(a) Continued



LOCATION & CLEARANCE DIMENSIONS

A	11' 9"	L	16' 10"
B'	20' 0"	M	5' 9"
C	14' 6"	N	18' 0"
D	15' 8"	O	1' 4"
E	11' 0"	P	5' 9"
F	4' 7 1/2"	Q	36' 2"
G	8' 4"		
H	0' 6"		
I	11' 6"		
J	3' 8"		
K	33' 8"		

Hull lines of SS *United States*
from builder's faired mold loft
offsets

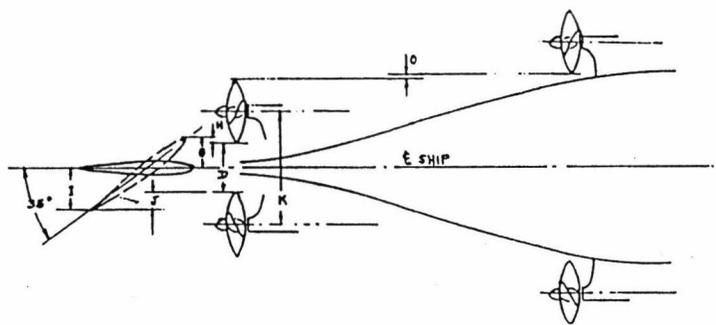
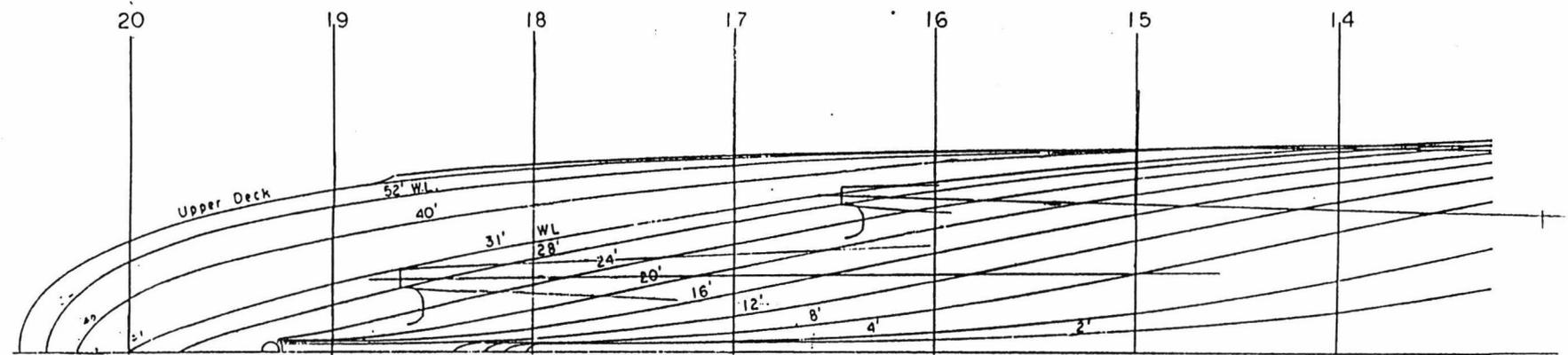
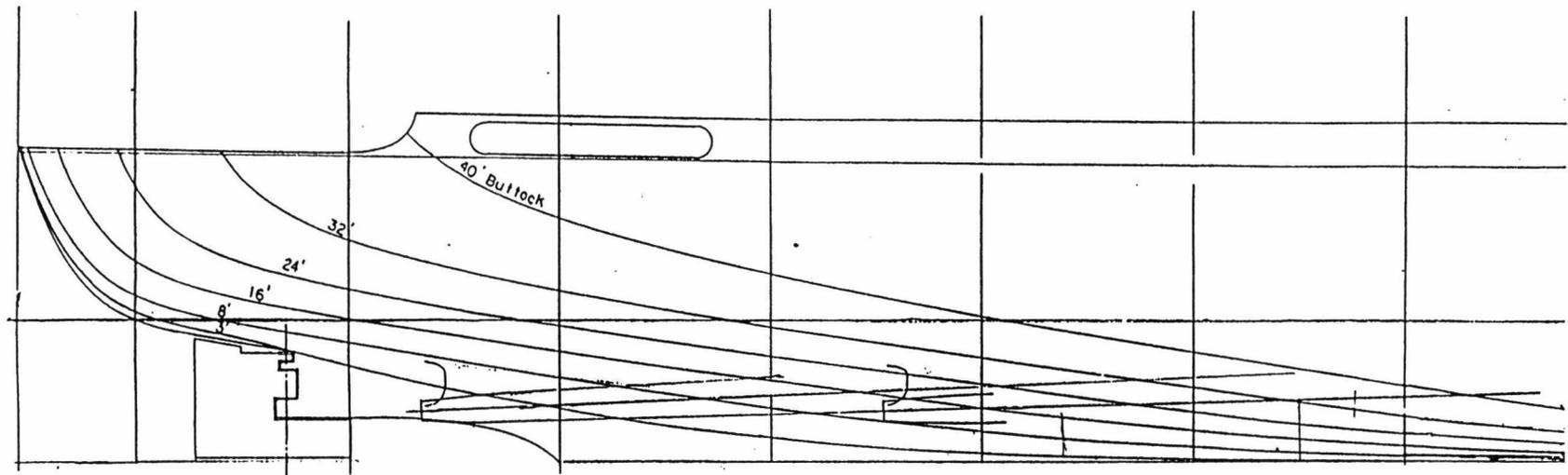
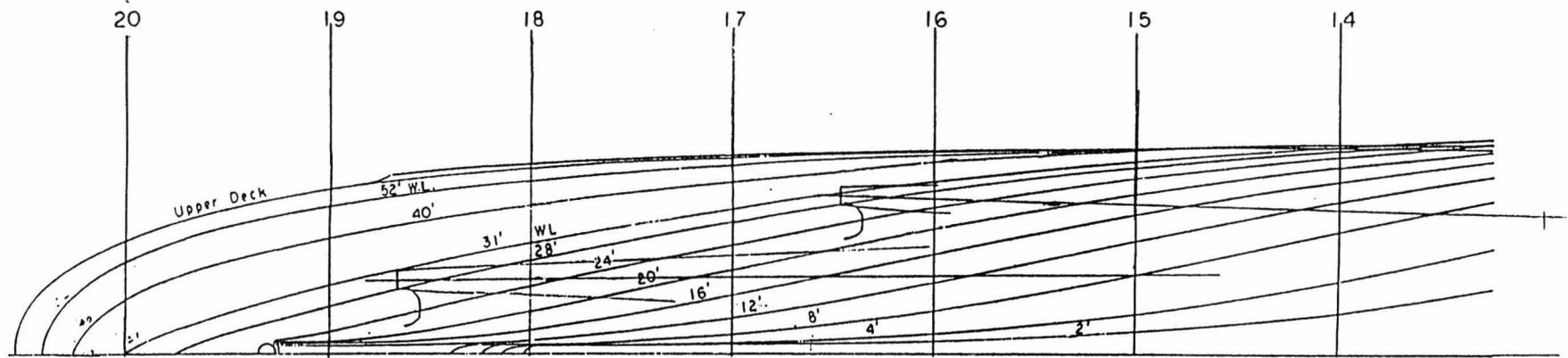
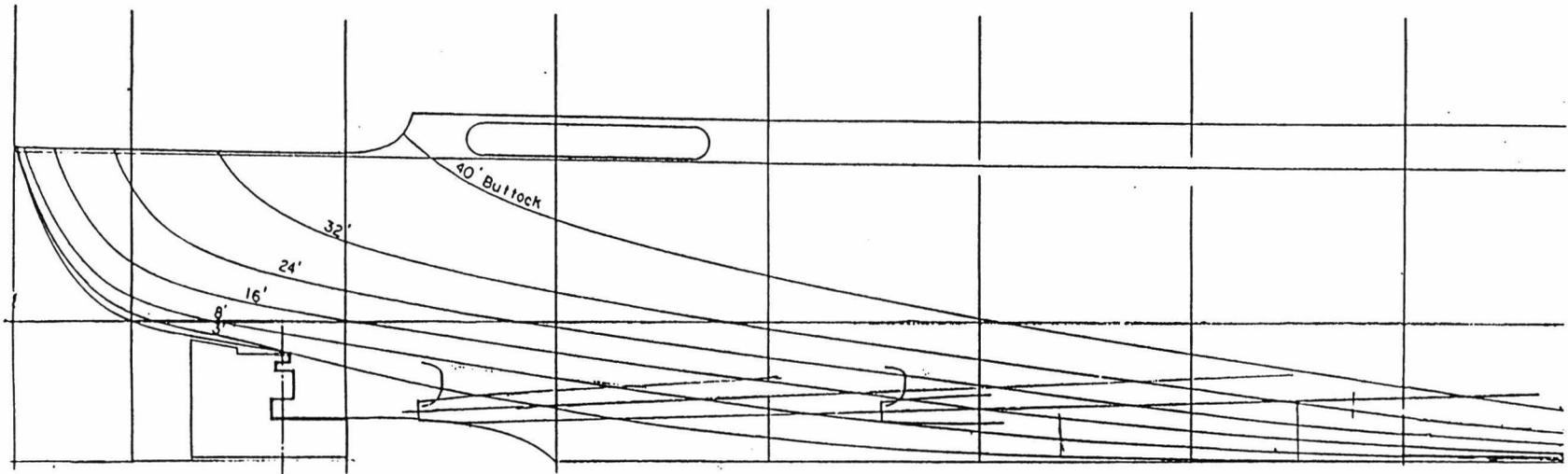


Fig. 1(c) Propeller locations and clearances



Hull lines of SS *United States*
 from builder's faired mold loft
 offsets

Fig. 1(a) Sheer and half-breadth plans (foreshortened to fit in page)



Hull lines of SS *United States*
from builder's faired mold loft
offsets

Fig. 1(a) Sheer and half-breadth plans (foreshortened to fit in page)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY SS UNITED STATES (Steamship)
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Philadelphia

DATE RECEIVED: 4/22/99 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/03/99
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/19/99 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/06/99
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 99000609

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: Y
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

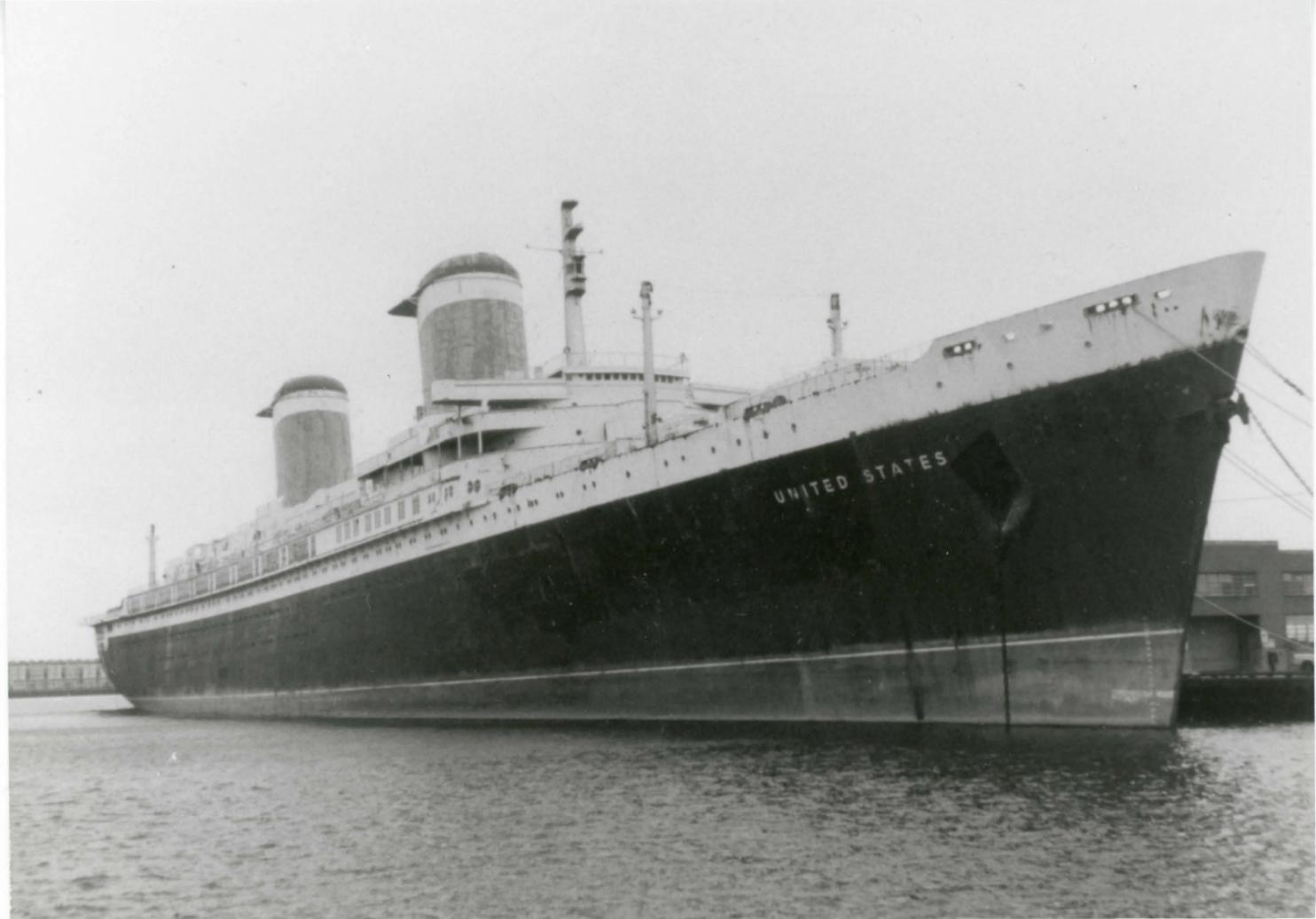
Constructed in 1952, the S.S. United States, is exceptionally important for engineering for its hull design and propulsion system. While stripped of its interior features associated with its use as a passenger liner, the ship retains integrity of its engineering features which made it the fastest ocean-liner ever built.

RECOM./CRITERIA accept c

REVIEWER Patrick Anders DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 6/3/99

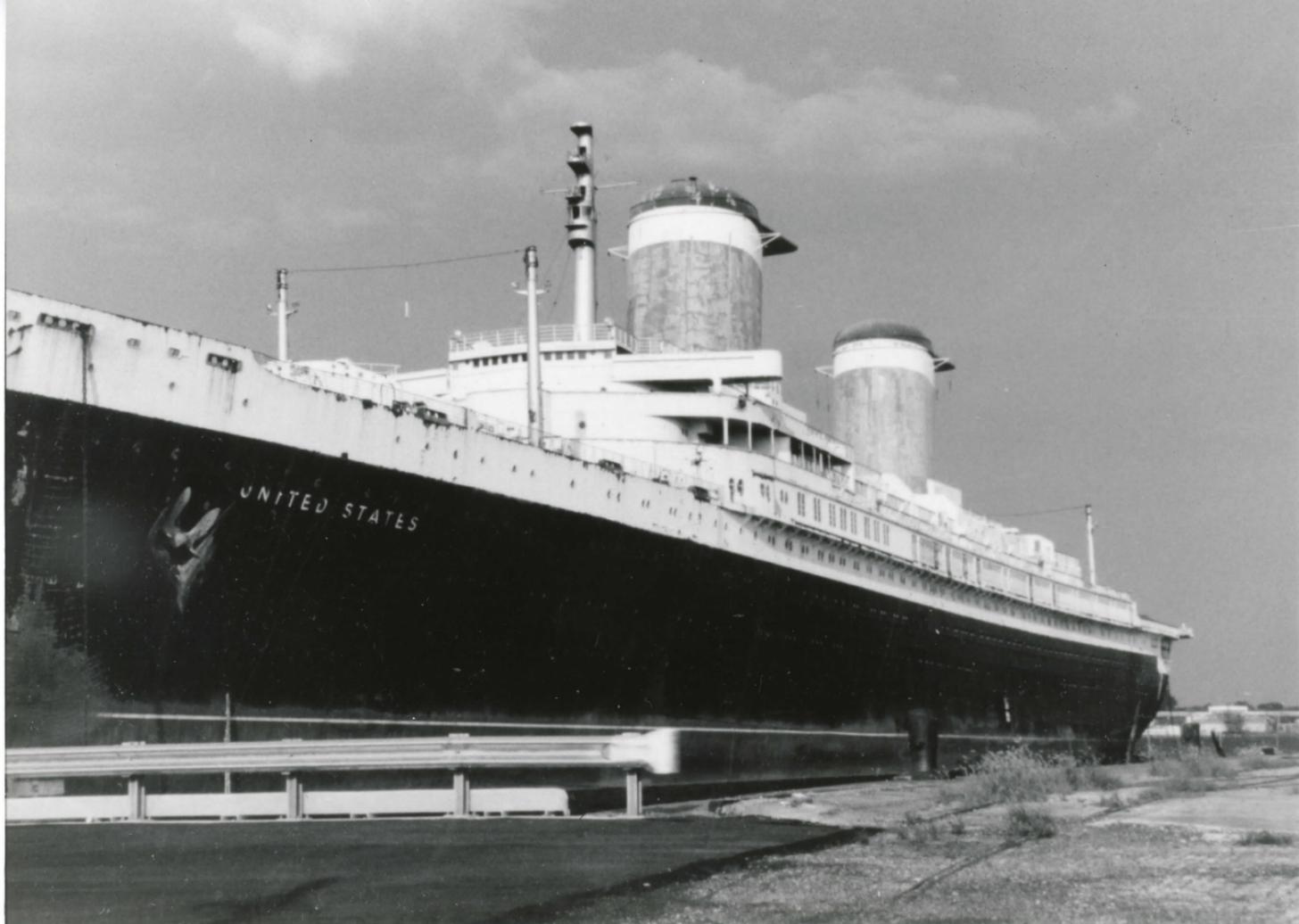
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



UNITED STATES

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA
August 1997
Bill DiBenedettoRaleigh, NC
Port Side, Looking East

#1



UNITED STATES

SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA
August 1996

Bill DiBenedetto, Raleigh, NC
Starboard Side Looking East

#2

98

0043822 2311 N N

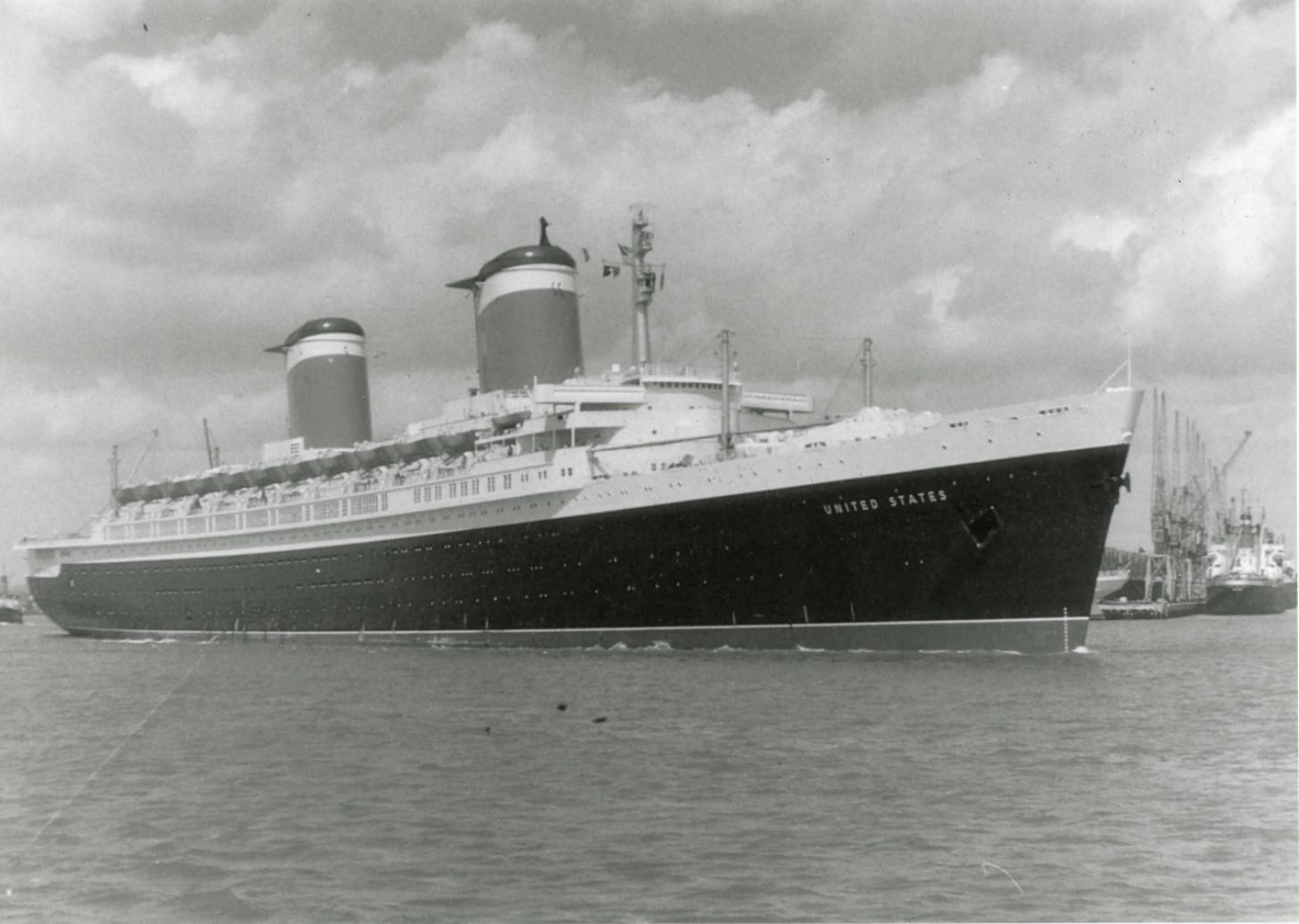


SS UNITED STATES
Philadelphia, PA
August 1997

Bill DiBenedetto, Raleigh, NC
Port Side Looking West

#3

JUNE 98 [05]818 2311 N N



UNITED STATES

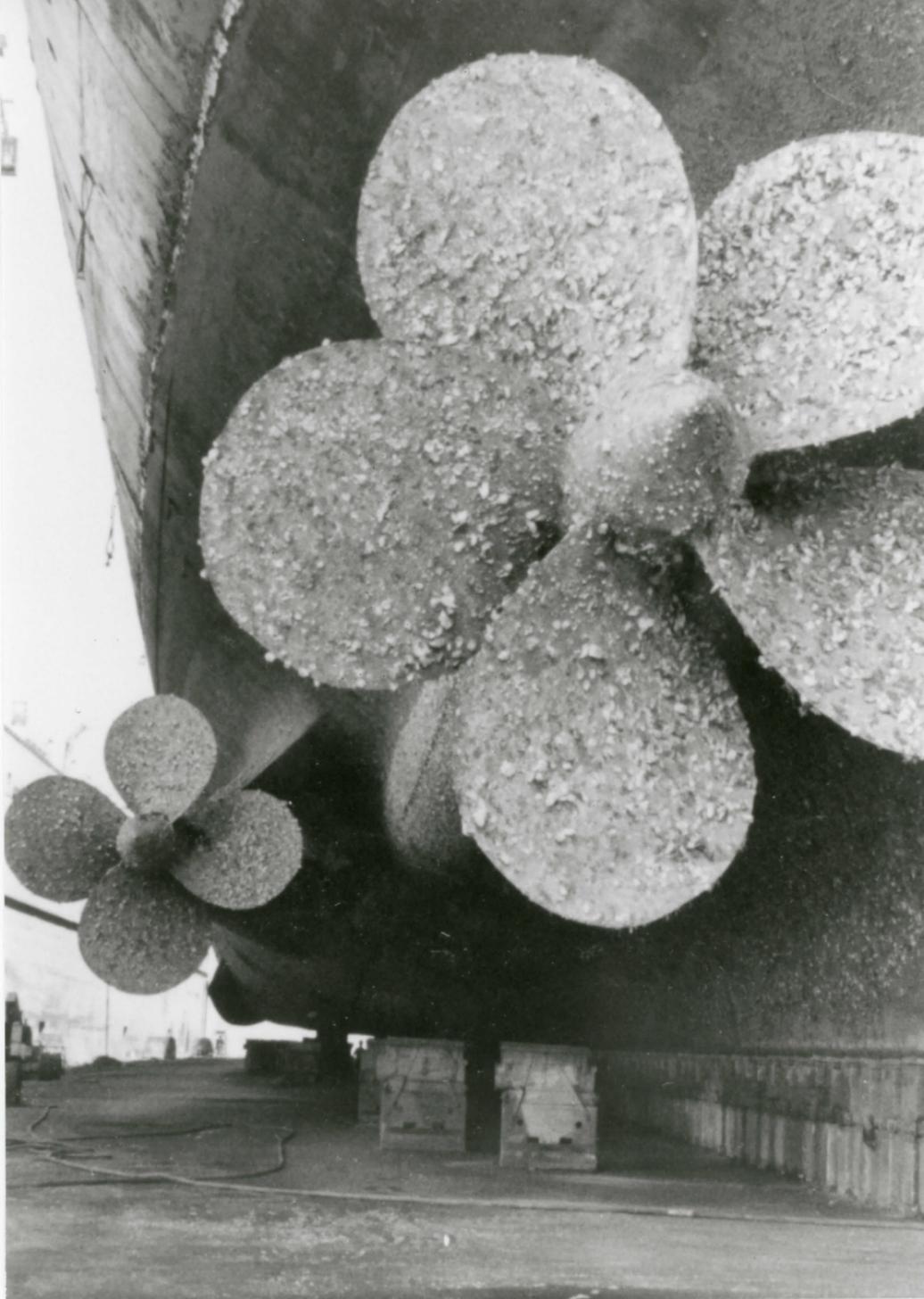
SS UNITED STATES
Southampton, England
Late 1960's
Photographer Unknown
Negative, Raleigh, NC

#4



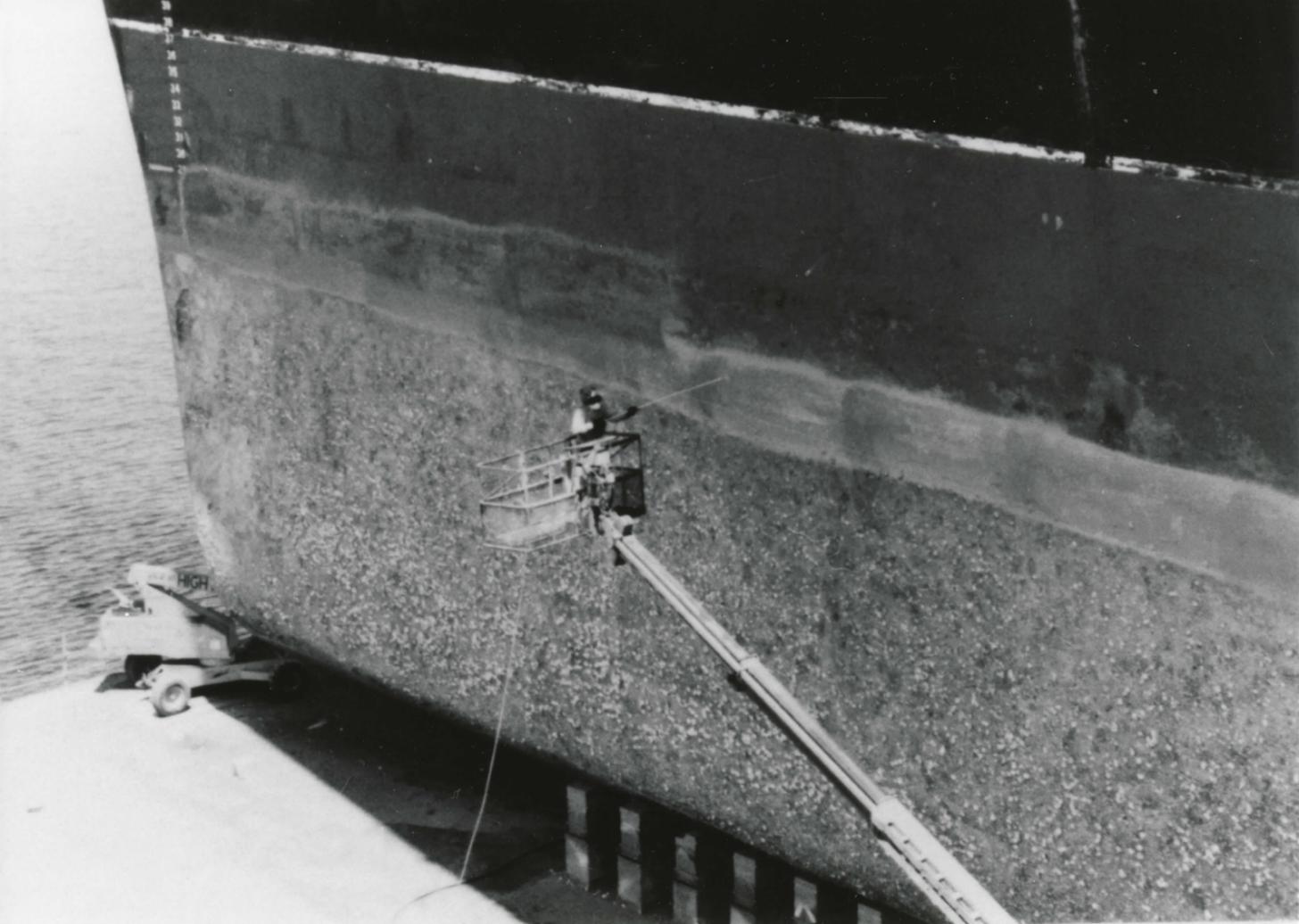
SS UNITED STATES
May 1980
Port Side Looking Down
Ship Facing North
Norfolk, VA
Photographer Unknown
Negative, Raleigh, NC

#5



SS UNITED STATES
May 1980 Norfolk, VA
Propellers Port Side
Ship Facing North
Photographer Unknown
Negative, Raleigh, NC

#4



SS UNITED STATES

May 1980

Norfolk VA

Bow View Port Side

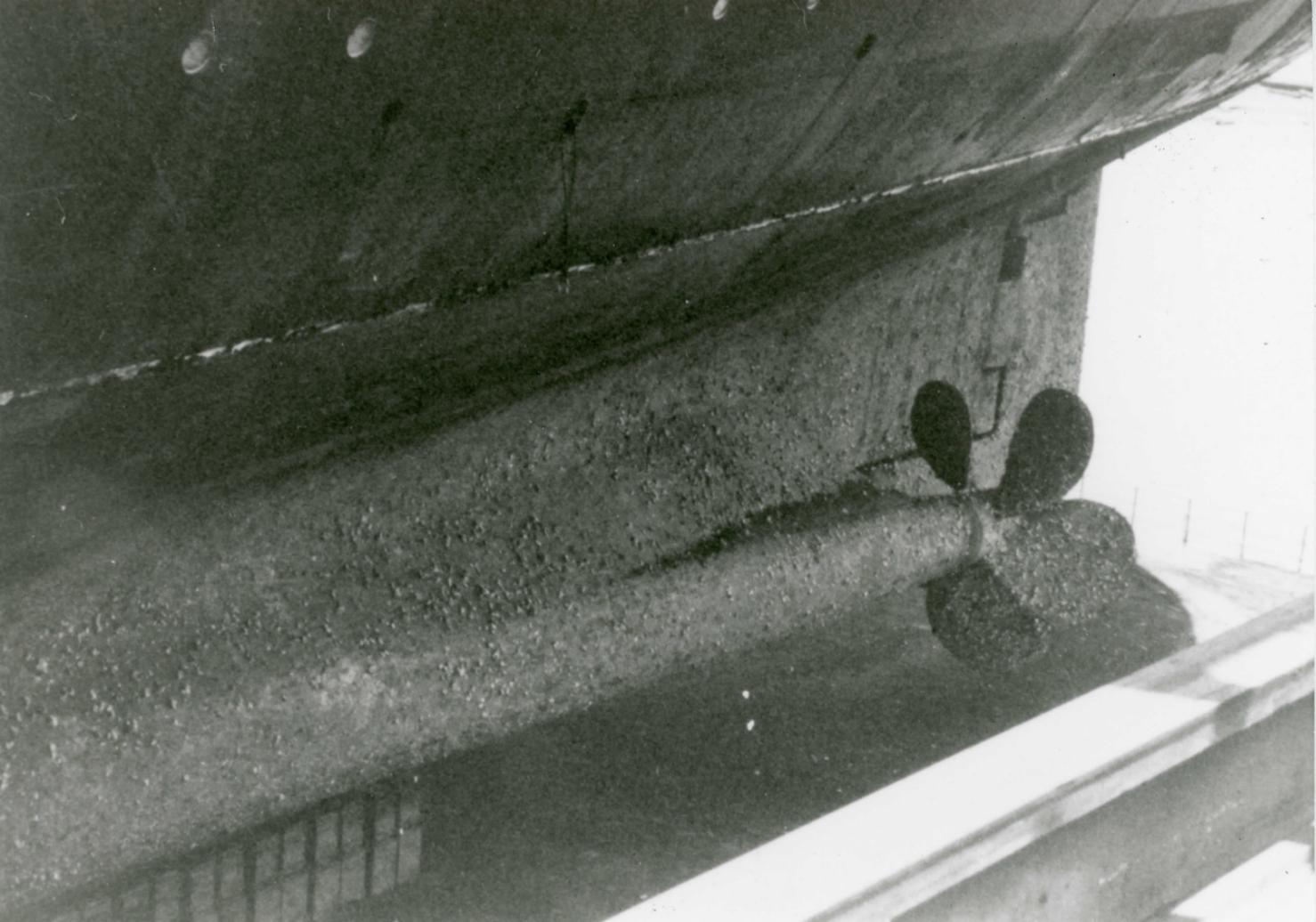
Ship Facing North

Photographer Unknown

Negative, Raleigh, NC

#7

[09]818 2311 N 1



SS UNITED STATES

May 1980

Norfolk VA

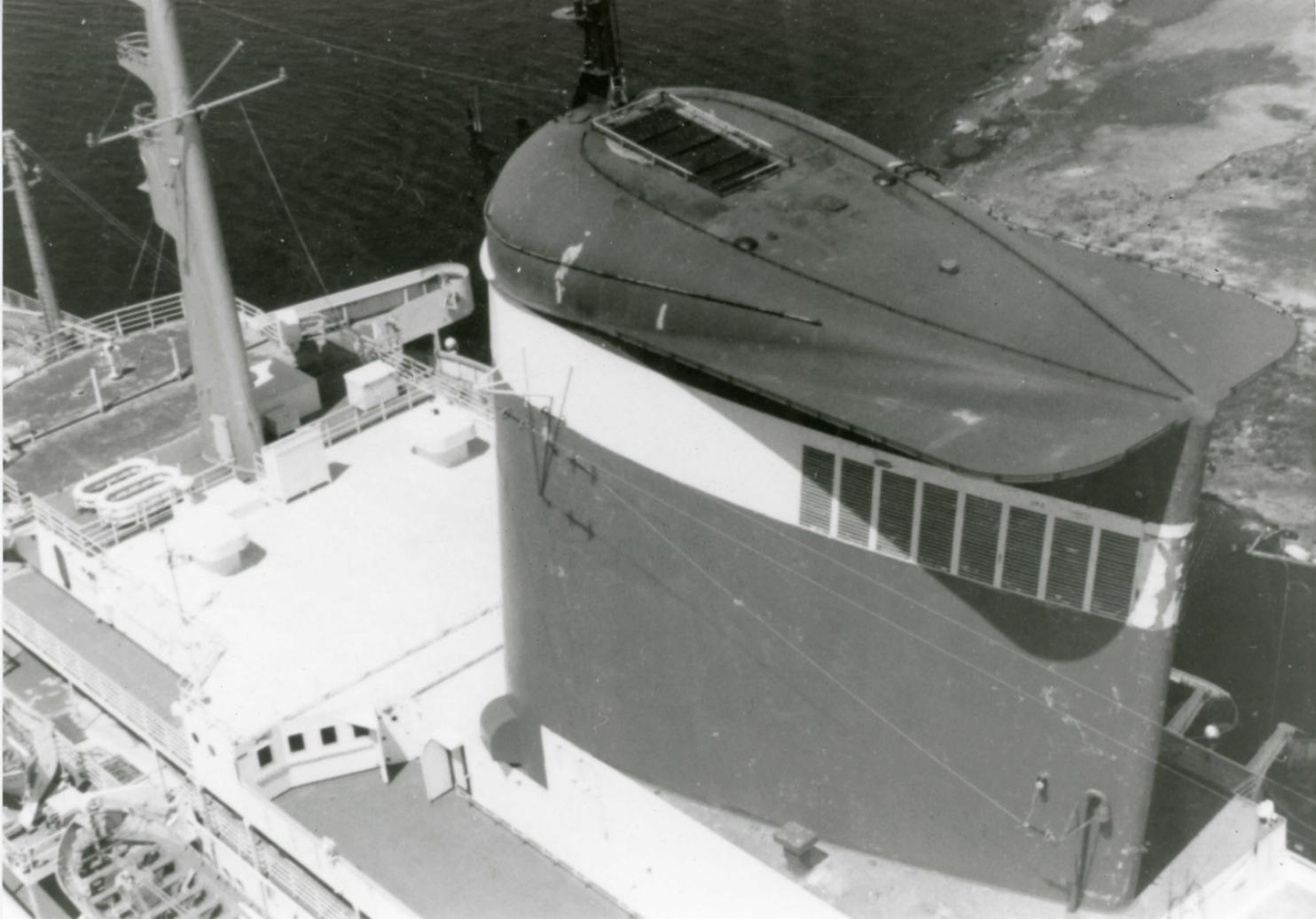
Aft Propeller Port Side

Ship Facing North

Photographer Unknown

Negative Raleigh NC

#8



SS UNITED STATES

May 1980

Norfolk VA

Forward Smokestack Port Side

Ship Facing North

Photographer Unknown

Negative, Raleigh NC

11 #F-9



SS UNITED STATES

Bridge

1981

Norfolk VA

Facing West

Photograhper Unknown

Negative Raleigh NC

#10



SS UNITED STATES
Radio Room
July 1981
Norfolk, VA
Photographer Unknown
Negative Raleigh NC

11



SSUNITED STATES

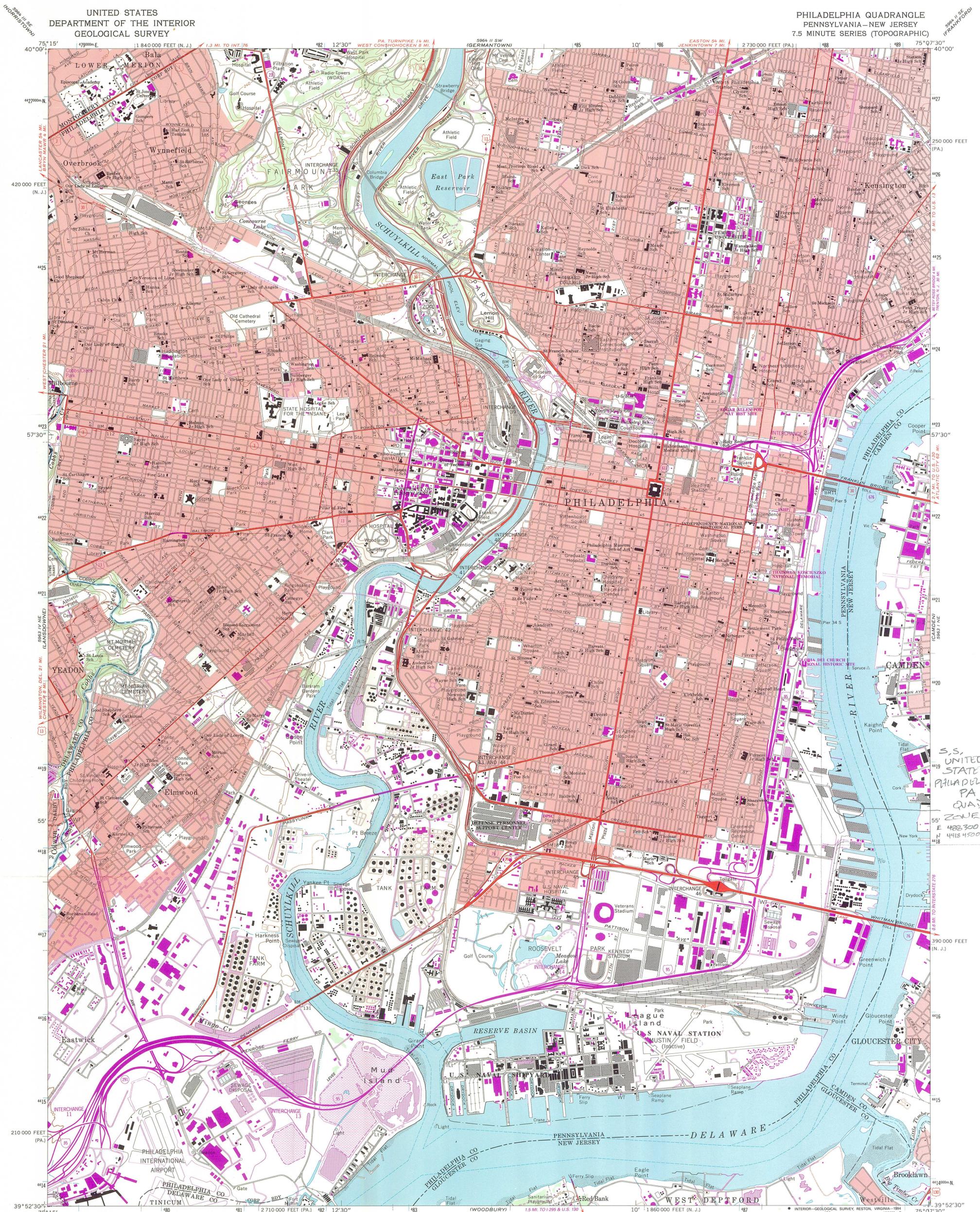
JULY 1952

New York Harbour

Photographer Unknown

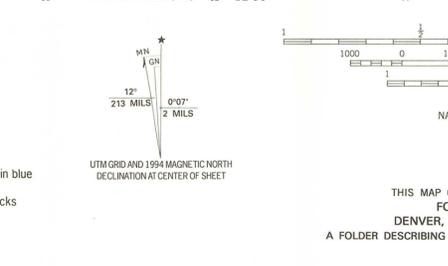
Negative, Raleigh, NC

12



S.S. UNITED STATES
PHILADELPHIA
PA
ZONE 18
E 488300
N 44184500

Mapped by the U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey
Revised by the U.S. Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1946. Topography by planetable surveys 1947. Revised by
the U.S. Geological Survey from aerial photographs taken 1965
Field checked 1967
Projection: Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone
(Lambert conformal conic)
10,000-foot grid ticks: Pennsylvania coordinate system,
south zone and New Jersey coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue
1927 North American Datum (NAD 27)
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute
intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the
National or State reservations shown on this map
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled by the U.S. Geological Survey from aerial photographs taken 1990 and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1994.
Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours. Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas.

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

PHILADELPHIA, PA. - N. J.
39075-H2-TF-024
1987
REVISED 1994
DMA 5963 1 NW - SERIES V831



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

70 DAN

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL
COMMISSION
One Parkway
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102
683-4590
Fax 683-4594

WAYNE S. SPILOVE
Chairman

RICHARD TYLER, Ph.D.
Historic Preservation Officer

16 February 1999

Brenda Barrett, Director
Bureaus for Historic Preservation
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
P.O. Box 1026
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17108-1026

Dear Ms. Barrett:

At its meeting of 12 November 1998, the Philadelphia Historical Commission considered the nomination of the *S.S. United States* for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Prior to the meeting each member of the Commission received a copy of the nomination.

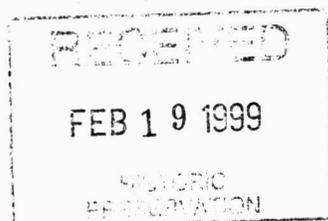
I commented briefly on the criteria of the National Register and the significance of the *S.S. United States*. The Commission voted unanimously that the *S.S. United States* meets criterion C of the National Register and recommended its entry on the National Register.

The Commission provided public notice of its meeting of 12 November by placing an advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation. The Commission also advised by letter the owner of the *S.S. United States* and the preparer of the nomination.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Yours truly,

Richard Tyler
Historic Preservation Officer



Anselm T. W. Richards
110 North Woodstock Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103



Mr. Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street RM NC 400
Washington, D.C. 20240
April 21, 1999

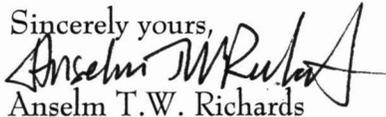
Dear Mr. Lusignan;

A wonderful treasure sits rusting at a municipal pier in Philadelphia. Many pass by without as much as a thought as to whom and what she is, her glorious past and her representation of American pride both of industry and society. This grand lady is in poor health and dire need of help. Her facade that for many years portrayed elegance, glamour and style is now cracking under the stress of the elements.

Not only has this grand lady served her country well, but she is the embodiment of a bygone era a floating portrait of the past. As with all historical places, something in the intrinsic nature of the place bears witness to our country, the period in both national history and also the world's position at that time. This lady holds a position in the catalogues of our nation's past with the now enshrined places of the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. She demands the attention given these historic shrines to guarantee her preservation for the future.

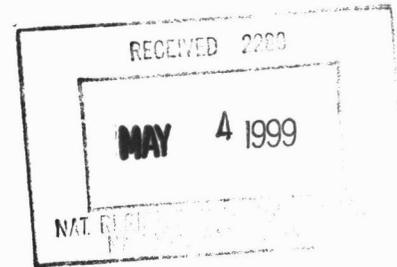
Our lady, the ocean liner *United States*, has completed many short trips on the long voyage to save her from the scrap yard. Please, in recognition of her past and her witness of our great nation to the world, add her to the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely yours,


Anselm T.W. Richards

Brian S. Ladley
6655 McCallum Street, Apt. 302
Philadelphia, PA 19119
215-843-1665 (home)
215-422-1387 (office)

April 21, 1999



Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Lusignan,

I am writing to express my deep interest in the preservation of the ocean liner SS United States. I was thrilled to hear that the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission unanimously nominated the ship as a national treasure to be listed on the historical register. I urge the National Park Service to follow suit and list her on the register. The SS United States, or the "Big U", is one of our most important and most threatened landmarks. Her supporters, and there are many, want to see her preserved in some manner. She is the only tangible reminder of an era gone by in our national history. The Big U is the prime example of American naval design and was the fastest ocean liner ever. Many famous people were among her passengers, including President Clinton.

This unique symbol of national pride should not be allowed to be sold for scrap. It must be preserved for a whole new generation of Americans who have never had the chance to step foot on an ocean liner. I would fall into that category. I am twenty five years old and was born too late for the age of regular ocean travel. Fortunately, I live in Philadelphia, and from my office window, I can see the two huge funnels painted red, white, and blue looming above the Delaware River as the finest American vessel ever built rusts away, awaiting her fate. I hope it can be a happy one.

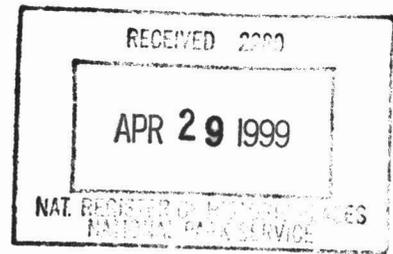
To be listed on the National Register of Historic Places will be an important step in the preservation of the SS United States, as well as a fitting title to bestow upon her. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Brian S. Ladley

April 21, 1999

National Register of Historic Places
Attn: Paul Lusignan
1849 C Street RM NC 400
Washington DC, 20240



Dear Mr. Lusignan:

I just heard that the SS United States passenger ship is a nominee for the National Register of Historic Places. I hope that the National Park Service accepts this nomination and grants the SS United States recognition on the National Register.

In the summer of 1959 my family returned to the US aboard this magnificent vessel. My father had been stationed in France and Germany where he served with thousands of other Americans involved with rebuilding and defending post-war Europe. Our family was but one of thousands of military and civilian families who benefited from the astonishing comfort and speed of an Atlantic crossing on the SS United States.

This ship is a truly remarkable engineering, architectural and organizational achievement. She so aptly demonstrates the American spirit, consistently outperforming all the other ships of her type. Yet she was designed and built by a nation with a very small commercial maritime industry. Indeed, she was one of just a handful of passenger vessels built in the US -- yet, the SS United States was the greatest of all the trans oceanic passenger vessels built before or since.

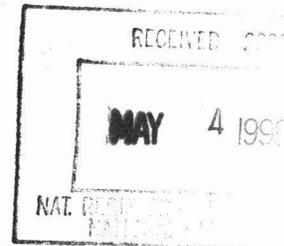
The SS United States served this nation with power and grace for 17 years, as a passenger liner, as a convertible troop carrier for times of conflict, and as a symbol of America's leadership and ingenuity. She remains today in Philadelphia, now sadly rusted and faded. But rust and fade cannot conceal the greatness -- she still looks like she's moving at 35 knots and still shows the proud name United States on her bow.

This great ship seems to qualify in every way as a historic place of national significance. Please help preserve the vessel and its proud history by placing her in the Register.

Very truly yours,

William N. Sullivan, US Citizen
324 Hermosa SE
Albuquerque, NM
87108

1 Lookout Avenue
Falmouth Heights
Cape Cod, MA 02540
April 22, 1999



Dear Mr. Lusignan,

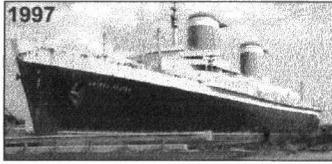
I have recently seen on the news that the ocean liner, the S.S. United States, has the opportunity to be saved and made into a park. I most certainly hope that our government will do that.

I grew up in this century and saw many firsts such as airplanes, jets, rockets, computers, and more. These always are exciting and impressive at first but then become common place. Years later we look at them as really something and wish that we still had one for our museums. The S.S. United States is one of those monumental pieces that express American ingenuity and industry. When it was launched, it was the greatest ship that ever existed. To loose this symbol of America at her peak would be a shame.

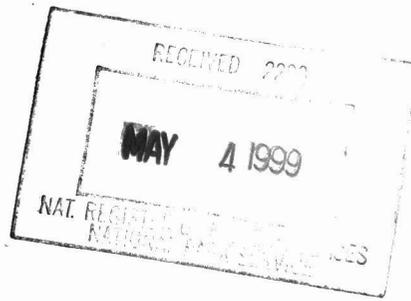
I hope that you and your committee will vote for her to listed on your register.

Sincerely,


Dorothy C. Argento



Mr. Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street — RM NC 400
Washington DC, 20240



Joseph G. Mizii
132 Parkview Drive
Teaneck, NJ 07666-3804
jgmsys@gate.cybernex.net

April 23, 1999

Mr. Lusignan:

I am writing to you today because an old friend is in need of your help. Please, allow me to elaborate.

It has come to my attention that the National Park Service is considering the nomination of the SS United States as a possible candidate for National Monument status. This is an important decision that members of the SS United States Foundation and people around the world feel would be appropriate given her enormous achievements and contributions to the betterment of American society at large. Her accomplishments, therefore, are of significant national prominence, even though she is not yet fifty years old. Although I have never sailed on her (I am all of thirty-two years old), I somehow feel connected to her.

When I was but a small child, possibly at the age of three, my parents would routinely escort my sister and I on excursions to the port of New York to see the passenger ships in their berths. In those happy days before the spectre of terrorism appeared, one could tour the vessels as they were docked. I have a dim recollection of seeing those great red, white and blue funnels towering over those of the other ships and above the piers. I suspect I would have been awestruck at the time (although clearly not grasping the sight given my age then), as I was when I recently visited her in Philadelphia. But now, those magnificent red, white and blue funnels have faded, and the sight of them, along with that of the great rust patch on her port bow, moved me to great pity. It is not right that such a symbol of American ingenuity at its finest be allowed to fade away. And so I am asking you, on behalf of the SS United States Foundation, to seriously consider her nomination.

You may be saying to yourself, "Why should I care about an old rusty ship possessed of virtually no commercial value?" The answer is that the ship **DOES have value**. She is structurally sound, according to her own designers, even at this advanced age. And as has been previously stated in other words, she can still stir awe in the heart of the beholder. I was literally speechless when I visited her in Philadelphia.

The SS United States Foundation, through the power of the Internet, has generated a nationwide—no, now worldwide—grassroots effort to save the ship. Yes, **WORLDWIDE!** People from **over fifty countries** have sent e-mail messages to the chairman of the Foundation, Mr. Robert Westover, and to Michael Alexander, creator of the www.ss-united-states.com web site, supporting our efforts and wanting to involve themselves in the issue. News stories have even appeared on the BBC about the Big U. Another question which might come to mind right now is, "What good will saving this ship do for the United States of America?" I can address this.

We are currently in an age filled with apathy, disappointment and disillusionment. As a society, there are few things left worth believing in. Would it not be fitting, then, to turn to a symbol of when America was truly great, when our nation was the envy of the world, when Americans were loved and respected wherever they went, to act as a rallying cry to reunite a divided nation? Could we not then also heal a wounded world through that symbol? That symbol, for me, is the SS United States, a sentiment already echoed by many across the nation, and around the world.

Please, feel free to go to Mr. Alexander's web site. Learn everything you can about the Big U. There is so much to know, but I cannot put it all forth here. I've probably already said a mouthful. Will you not join our crusade?

Thank you for your time and consideration of such an important issue to many.

Sincerely,

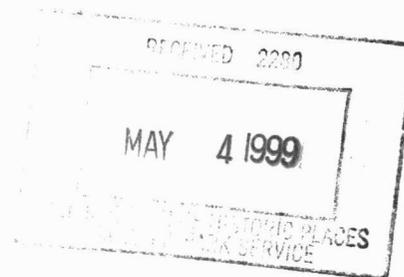
Joseph G. Mizii
Voting member, SS United States Foundation

Glencoe Models

Box 846
Northboro
Massachusetts
01532
Tel 508 869-6877
Fax 508 869-2462

23 APR 99

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



RE: Listing the **SS UNITED STATES** on the National Register

Dear Mr. Lusignan,

I have been following many of the events regarding the preservation of the ship, **S.S. United States**. I think that saving this ship is one of the important things that your department can do in the last days of this century.

The **S. S United States** is a symbol of our nation's greatness. She exemplifies our postwar place in the world. Her construction may be simple by today's standard but she is also extremely rugged and well built.

As we turn into the 21st century and reflect back upon the 20th century, I think that one of the most important aspects of this last century will be the explosion of technology. During that period we developed the automobile, airplane, computer, laser, television, went to the Moon and more. The **S.S. United States** is a symbol of all of that. It was the pinnacle of ocean liners and American ship building.

As I mentioned earlier, this ship is extremely well built which will make her less expensive to maintain over time. That good American construction is easily evident when you approach her. I was in more awe seeing her for the first time than all but one of our nation's monument. That exception was the Statue of Liberty. You just look at her in her red, white, and blue and you say, "*Now, that's American!*"

I manufacture plastic models for the hobby market. We produce a large kit of the **S.S. United States** from molds made during her debut in the 1950s. When I issued this kit I was surprised by two things. The first was the general response of the American public. Usually, ships are only famous if they sunk. However, everyone knew the "**Big U**". I had letters flowing in thanking me for saving these old molds of this ship. People look at her with incredible respect and fondness. The second was that our foreign distributors did very well with the sales of this kit. I expected sales to be marginal because she is *so* American. People from other lands look upon the **S.S. United States** with the same impression that we do and as a symbol of greatness.

The **S. S United States** would not only be monument of great ships, She would also be a tribute

to American ship building and the American worker.

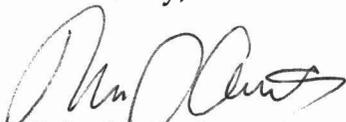
I greatly fear that our nation is loosing its grip on manufacturing. I watch the stock market and wonder if all of that money had been invested into American manufacturing, what would our nation's economy be like? The **S.S. United States** is an excellent example of what we can make. She would be a good lesson for children and adults of what we once use to do and can do again.

In my younger years, I was interested in museum education and employment. I worked at two museums, the *New England Science Center* and the *Higgins Armoury Museum*. I also sell quite a bit of our product to museum shops. I have also seen an explosion of interest in museums about aircraft, ships, and technology; particularly aircraft. I believe that a museum of the **S.S. United States** would be commercial success. I for one would make many trips to her.

Should your department list her on the National Register, you can count on our company to help you in what ever fashion we can.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nicholas P. Argento".

Nicholas P. Argento
President

Glencoe Models

24 APR 99

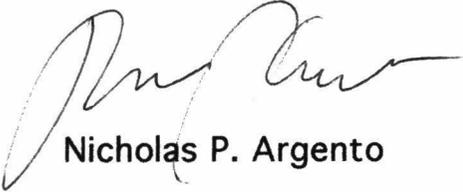
Dear Mr. Lusignan,

I have included a model kit and extra cover of the artwork for you and your department. I hope that having a physical representation of the might assist you in your decision.

Please do what you wish with the model and do not feel obligated to return it or re-imburse us for it. If your policy is not to accept such things, please dispose of it to someone needy. The art work, use for what ever use you need.

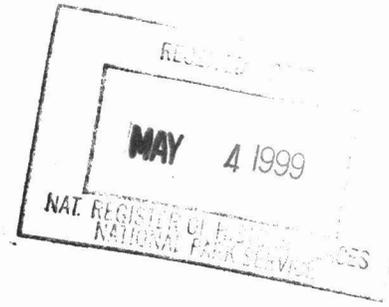
Thank you and good luck.

Yours truly,



Nicholas P. Argento

Herbert A. Woodcock, III
10 Cobble Hill Drive
Dover, NH 03820



April 24, 1999

National Register of Historic Places
Paul Lusignan
1849 C. Street RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Lusignan,

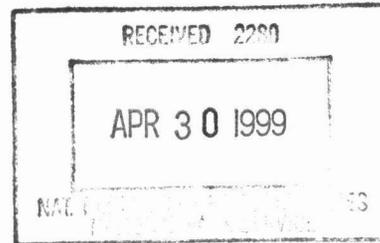
I have seen in the newspapers that our nation's greatest ocean liner, SS United States, is being considered as a national monument. I hope that this great ship will be accepted as such. Not only is she an emblem our nation's greatness in technology and manufacturing but I believe that she will be commercial success like so many of the growing ship museums today.

I wonder if you have considered this. The SS United States was designed as much to be a troop ship as an ocean liner. The only reason that she was not scrapped was because of this dual nature. If she is preserved, she can still function as a troop ship if needed. As events evolve in this world, we might just need such a ship. In Winston Churchill's biography he is quoted as saying that the ocean liners (carrying thousands and thousands of soldiers to Europe) saved the war.

I hope that you'll preserve the SS United States.

Sincerely,

CHARLES A. EATON
32 DOCK LANE
SALISBURY, MA 01952



April 24, 1999

National Register of Historic Places
Paul Lusignan
1849 C. Street RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

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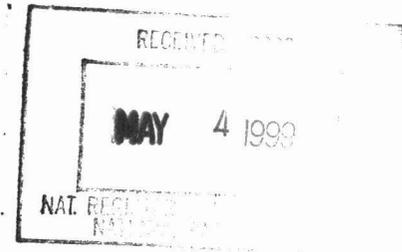
I hope that you'll preserve the SS United States.

Sincerely,

Ted Kyrios

193 Lion's Mouth Road

Amesbury, MA. 01913



April 24, 1999

National Register of Historic Places
Paul Lusignan
1849 C. Street RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

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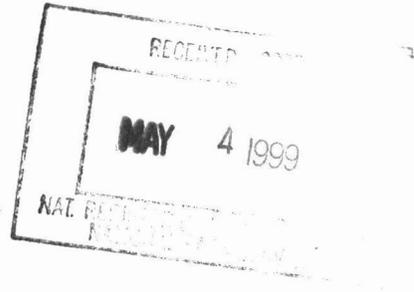
Sincerely,

Ted Kyrios, MA. in U.S. History.

Winthrop A Webster

PO Box 726

Berwick, Me, 03901



April 24, 1999

National Register of Historic Places
Paul Lusignan
1849 C. Street RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Lusignan,

I have seen in the newspapers that our nation's greatest ocean liner, SS United States, is being considered as a national monument. I hope that this great ship will be accepted as such. Not only is she an emblem our nation's greatness in technology and manufacturing but I believe that she will be commercial success like so many of the growing ship museums today.

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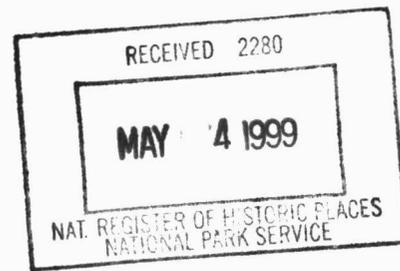
I hope that you'll preserve the SS United States.

Sincerely,

Winthrop A Webster

April 26, 1999

National Register of Historic Places
Paul Lusignan
1849 C Street RM NC 400
Washington DC, 20240



Dear Mr. Lusignan,

I am writing this letter with the intent to persuade you to place the **S.S. United States** on the National Register of Historic Places. I am sure you are aware that this ship is a national treasure, an endangered piece of history, and one of America's greatest technological achievements. The loss that this country would suffer if this great ship were to be scrapped is immeasurable. I would place this magnificent ship in the same league as the Apollo11 capsule, the Wright Flyer, or the X-1 (the first plane to break the sound barrier). We preserve these because they are testament to what this country can do better than any other on the Earth. The S.S. United States should be placed in the same regard and should be allowed to teach others of the great things this country has accomplished, and as a memory of a time that will not be seen again.

On a more personal note, this ship has always had a place in my heart, and I would appreciate any help you could give to make certain she does not just live in my memories.

Thank you very much for any consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris R. Cunningham

Elvisrc@gdi.net
221 Tides Road
Winter Springs, FL 32708
407-767-2966

Michael David Wasiljov
4017 8th Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21225
410-354-1289
Mike24745@aol.com



28 April 99

National Register of Historic Places
Paul Lusignan
1849 C Street
Room NC-400
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Sir,

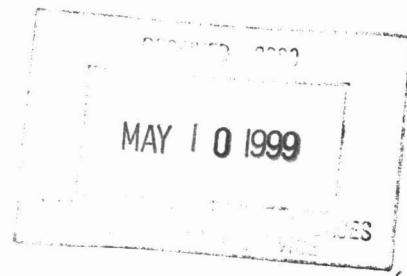
I am writing this letter to you in support of having the SS UNITED STATES listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This ship is of tremendous historical significance; the fastest ship of it's size and greatest ocean liner ever built. She is a tribute to American ingenuity and know how and deserves this recognition. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Michael David Wasiljov

Michael David Wasiljov

May 1, 1999



Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Lusignan,

I have become aware that the **S.S. United States** has come before the *National Register of Historic Places* for the purpose of being listed on the *Register*. I strongly support our nation listing the **S.S. United States** as an American treasure.

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As a park or museum, the **S.S. United States** would be a success. All one has to do is see the number of maritime and aviation museums that have grown during the last two decades to verify this. Americans are interested in their history. I believe that they will be more interested as the millennium changes and we reflect back on the momentous twentieth century.

I hope that your committee will recommend the **S.S. United States** for our nation's register. Many famous hotels are listed on our national register. If one considers an ocean liner to be a floating hotel, then it would not be out of the unusual to put her on our register.

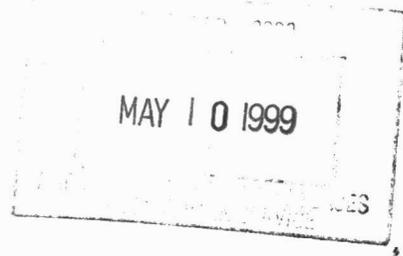
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Johnny Lewis
8614 Frontier AVE
Niagara Falls NY 14304

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



Dear Mr. Lusignan,

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Sincerely,



1143 PRAIRIE CREEK CT.

CONCORD N.C. 28027

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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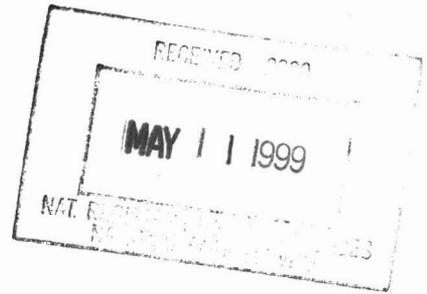
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rose M. Smet
503 Flag Pond Rd
Saco, Me 04072

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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Sincerely,

CAPT JOE RAWBAR

51 LENNOX AVE

AMHERST, NY 14226

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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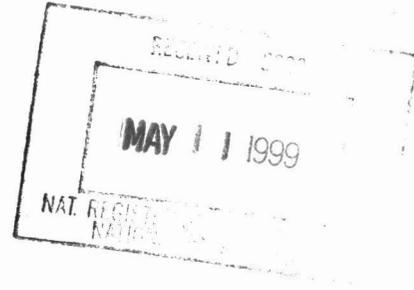
Yordon Smith

503 FLAG Pond Rd.

SACO, ME 04072

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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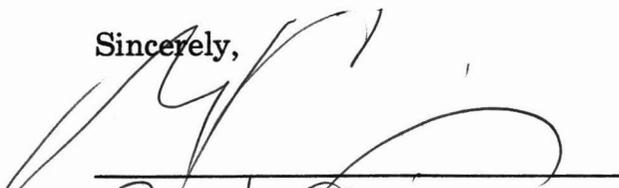
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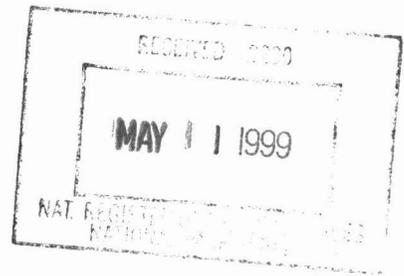


Robert G. Lusignan

BFO NJP

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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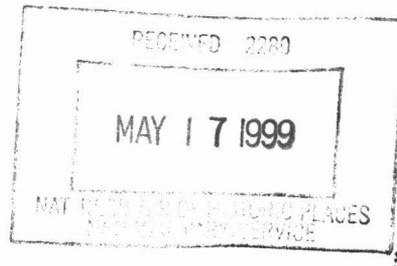
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Charles Chang
3740 BAZETTA Rd
CORTLAND OHIO 44410

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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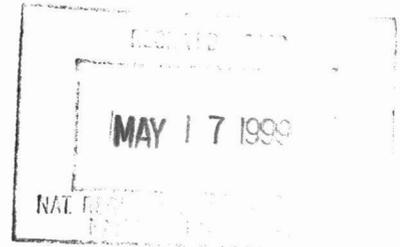
DAVID M SCHWAB

28 WANDA AVE

BUFFALO NY 14211

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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Nick Filippone MD

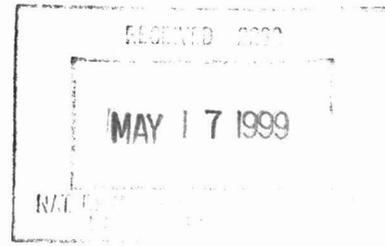
NICK FILIPPONE MD

1 Lemme Lane

SLINGERLANDS, N. Y. 12159

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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Sincerely,

Paulene Pless
823 East Lake Rd
Penn Yan NY 14527

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Georgine Banks
3031 Jefferson St.
Bethlehem, Pa. 18020



May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

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Sincerely, *GN*

George Nagelschmidt

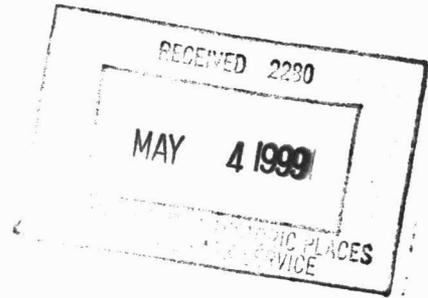
38 East St., Apt. 2

Fairport, N.Y. 14450



May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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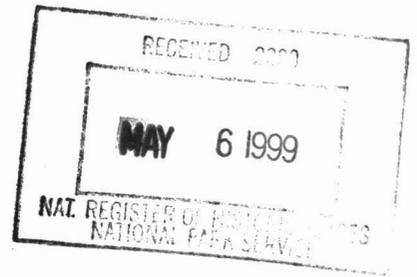
Sincerely,

JOHN KAVULICH

57 FLORAL PK.

BUFFALO NY

14225



May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

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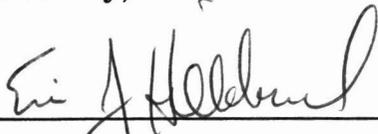
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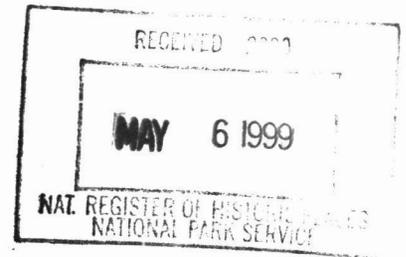


143 CADMON DR

WILLIAMSVILLE, NY 14221

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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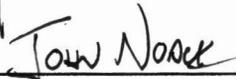
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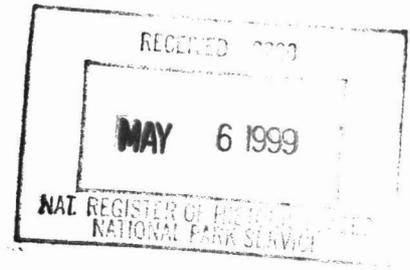


3972 RAINBOW CIRCLE

Uniontown, OH 44685

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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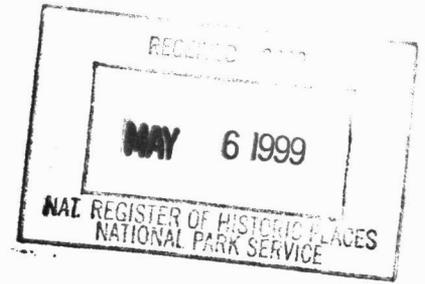
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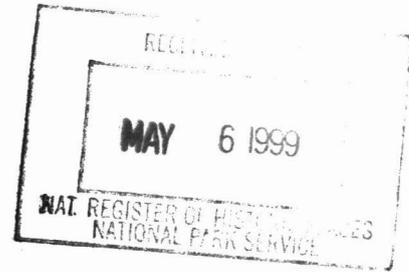


PO Box 134

Hop Bottom Pa 18824

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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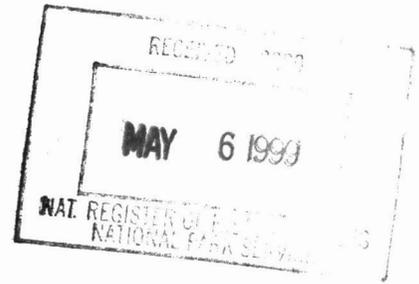
THOMAS J KUZMA

245 DAVISON RD

Lockport NEW YORK 14094

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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Sincerely,

TIMOTHY J. NORTHEM

2230 UNION RD

WEST SENECA NY 14224

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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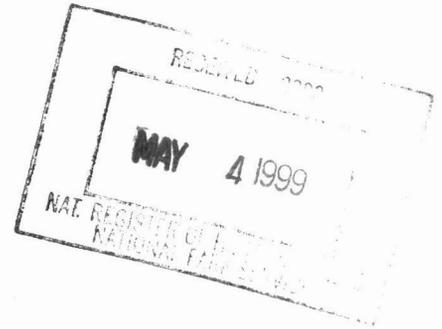
John S. Weller

278 TACOMA

BUFFALO NY 14216

May 1, 1999

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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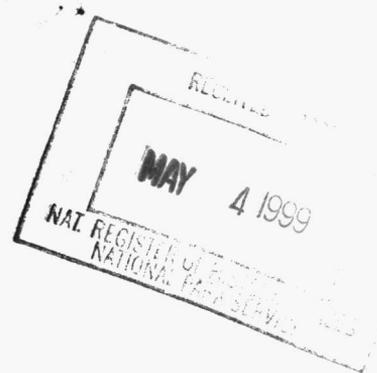
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Sincerely,

James Helland

1386 Electric Ave

Lackawanna NY

May 1, 1999

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National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Norman A Hughes
PO Box 691 Falls Station
Niagara Falls N.Y. 14303

Author: "Norberg; Lee" <NORBELE@mail.northgrum.com> at NP--INTERNET
Date: 5/7/99 6:36 AM
Priority: Normal
Receipt Requested
TO: Paul Lusignan at NP-WASO-NRHE
Subject: SS United States Listing on the Register

Dear Sir,

> As a fan and supporter of this wonderful tribute to maritime
> engineering, please include the " SS United States " on The
> National Register of Historic Places. As a youngster of about
> five years of age, my first view of her up close was at Pier 86
> in New York- her home port. My father took us (my family)
> there from Staten Island to see her first-hand. You might ask
> why the special interest in the SS United States? My father
> was employed by Gibbs&Cox in the time-frame of 1949-1952
> as a design electrical engineer working on various aspects
> of the SS United States electrical system lay-out. I also do
> remember him traveling by train from Pennsylvania Station
> in New York to Newport News, Virginia and staying there from
> Monday through Friday while she was being built. So yes, I do
> have a sentimental connection to this great ship of the trans
> Atlantic crossing era.

>
> She represented what this country stood for- our best talent in
> America to design, build and crew the best and safest passenger
> liner in the world. Great contributions of individual talent made "
> her "
> the ship she is and always will be - The SS United States. I can't
> think of a most fitting tribute to honor the ship and the people
> behind
> her by listing her on The National Register of Historic Places.
> Thank
> you for your valued time.

>
> Sincerely,
> Lee Norberg
> 158 Russell Road
> Oakdale, NY 11769-2140
>
>
>



The great SS United States, the National Flagship

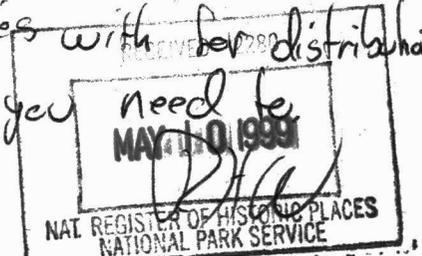
INFORMATION PACKAGE

for the

SS United States Foundation
P.O. Box 853
Washington DC 20044
Rhwestover@worldnet.att.net
703-625-3037

Paul,

I've sent along an info package that you can make 2 sided copies with for distribution if you need to.



A Message from the Chairman

Thank you for taking the time to look at our information package. What I feel is most exciting about this cause is that it's all volunteer. None of us are being paid. It's indeed a labor of love. Our hope is to see the SS United States restored as a touring museum, showcasing our nation's maritime achievements. Over a year ago, when I started this grass roots movement, I could not have imaged the amount of national attention we've been able to draw to the ship's plight. And now the interest in saving this once proud symbol of American maritime mastery is becoming an international cause. I was even interviewed by the largest radio station in Johannesburg, South Africa!

Those involved in this effort come from all walks of life and age groups; from elementary school children to senior citizens. Some of us have a love of the nautical world, some of us just think it's important to preserve something so magnificent as this ocean liner. The SS United States was--and still is--the fastest vessel of it's size ever built. She is an engineering marvel of the world. I hope you will find this a worthwhile cause.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Hudson Westover". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert Hudson Westover

A Short History of the National Flagship

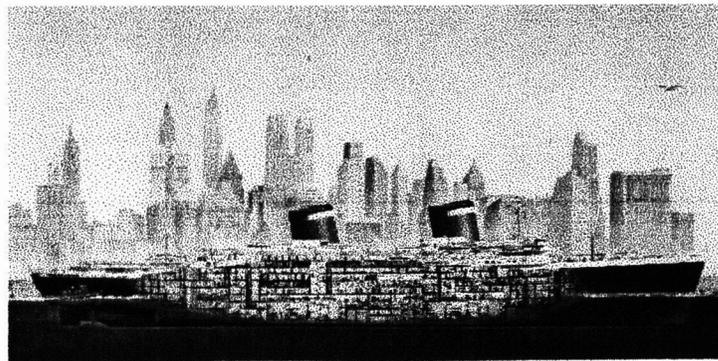
By: Michael Alfano

The ss United States was the brainchild of one of the world's foremost marine architects, William Francis Gibbs. His dream was to build a passenger ship that was faster, safer and more technologically advanced than anything else afloat. It was truly a construction project that challenged conventional thinking. In 1952, his dream became a reality when the ss United States crossed the North Atlantic in 3 days, 10 hours and 42 minutes averaging 35.59 knots (65.48 km/hr or 40.96 mph). The design characteristics encompassing the United States read straight out of a James Bond novel, many remaining classified by the Navy well into the late 70's:

- her 241,000 horsepower engines allowed her to reach a top speed of 43 knots (79.12 km/hr or 49.48 mph)* at 990'6" in length, she is the largest passenger vessel ever built in the United States
- materials in construction included over 2,000 tons of aluminum; she has a power-to-weight ratio that has never been equaled
- she could steam 10,000 miles without stopping for fuel or supplies
- the ship was totally fireproof, being constructed completely of non-flammable materials (publicists were so fond of pointing out that the only wood on board were in her pianos and the chopping blocks).

The ss United States' \$79 million construction cost was heavily underwritten by the federal government. After the wartime success of Britain's Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, as troop transports, the Navy wanted a superliner of their own that could be easily con-verted to troopship duty. Such was the case when the British government called on the liner Queen Elizabeth 2 to transport British troops to the Falkland Islands in 1982. The United States was constructed so that in just one day, she could be converted into a troop transport capable of carrying over 15,000 men. She could outrun anything afloat and steam non-stop anywhere in the world in less than 10 days. Although she was briefly on stand-by during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, she was never called to troop-ship duty.

Throughout her brief 17-year career, the United States held a near perfect schedule and never experienced an engineering failure. By comparison, the Queen Elizabeth 2 experienced recurring engine troubles that dated as far back as her builder's sea trials in 1969. It was so plagued with turbine troubles that after being adrift at sea without power on more than two occasions, her troublesome steam turbines were finally replaced with diesel units in 1986.



PASSENGER LINER S.S. UNITED STATES

Toward the end of the sixties, the jumbo jet invasion finally took it's toll on the famous trans-Atlantic superliners. On frequent sailings, the ship's 1000-plus crew often outnumbered paying passengers. In November 1969, faced with on-going union troubles and declining profits, the United States was sent to the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company in Newport News, Virginia for her annual overhaul. As

fate would have it, her boilers were never fired again. As the years passed, she remained docked in Norfolk, Virginia with little hope of revival.

The Pentagon, which was largely responsible for her construction, was, ironically, largely responsible for her demise. Because of the ship's highly secret design specifications, one of the stipulations that was incurred by the government was that the ship could never be sold to foreign interests. In the late 1970's Norwegian Caribbean Cruise Lines was looking for a large vessel that it could convert to cruise service. After being turned down by the Maritime Administration to purchase the ss United States, the company purchased the idled superliner France from the French government, rechristened her Norway, and returned her to service as the world's longest cruise ship.

In 1973 the Maritime Administration installed an extensive dehumidification system throughout the United States, leaving it virtually airtight. The system proved remarkably well when an unfaded copy of the New York Times from November 1969 was found in a lounge, ten years later. It was evident at this point that the government had no future plans for the United States. Once the proud flagship of a nation, the Maritime Administration now saw the ss United States as a liability on their balance sheet. In 1978, the Maritime Administration accepted a bid of \$5 million from Seattle-based United States Cruises Inc. who planned to return the ship to service as the world's first condominium-style cruise ship. The ship's new owner, Richard H. Hadley, planned to finance the \$150 million refit by selling cabins on a time-share basis. Brochures were printed, press releases issued and even contracts with shipyards signed, but nothing ever came to pass. Unable to pay the mounting dockage fees, in February 1992, United States Cruises Inc. was forced into bankruptcy. U.S. Marshals seized the ship and filed a court motion to sell the ship at auction.

The ship's fate was sealed. After a failed attempt at returning her to service, the ss United States, it seemed, would wind up at the ship breakers somewhere in the far east. A stay of execution was granted when Fred Mayer of Marmara Marine Inc., purchased the ship at auction for \$2.6 million. Mayer, chairman of Commodore Cruise Lines, emigrated to the United States in the mid-60's aboard the ss United States. He and his partners, one of which was a wealthy shipyard owner in Istanbul, Turkey, negotiated a plan with Cunard who would operate her as a running mate to the Queen Elizabeth 2. The ship would sail between New York and Southampton in the summer months while the winter months would be spent cruising the tropics. In June 1992, the ship departed U.S. waters in tow, for Istanbul, Turkey, where once financing was secured workers would restore the ship to her former glory.

Originally designed as a fireproof ship, asbestos was used extensively in the ship's interior construction. An asbestos compound called Marinite was used in favor of plywood. The ship was loaded with it and if she were to sail in the 90's, the compound would have to be removed. Workmen began the arduous process of stripping the ship's interior right down to her metal bulkheads. As was the case ten years earlier, attempts to secure government assistance in the project proved unsuccessful. Furthermore, faced with corporate restructuring, Cunard was no longer interested in operating another ship, especially one the size of the United States. It was thought that she would never see U.S. waters again, but in July 1996 the ss United States returned to her homeland, but this time to Philadelphia, where the dormant Navy yard would reopen with the task of restoring the superliner to its long lost former glory. As before, financing for the enormous project failed to materialize. The ship remains idle, awaiting the final chapter of her story.

* It is now known that the SS United States achieved speeds exceeding 44 knots, or 50mph (footnote by the SS United States Foundation).

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National Press Coverage

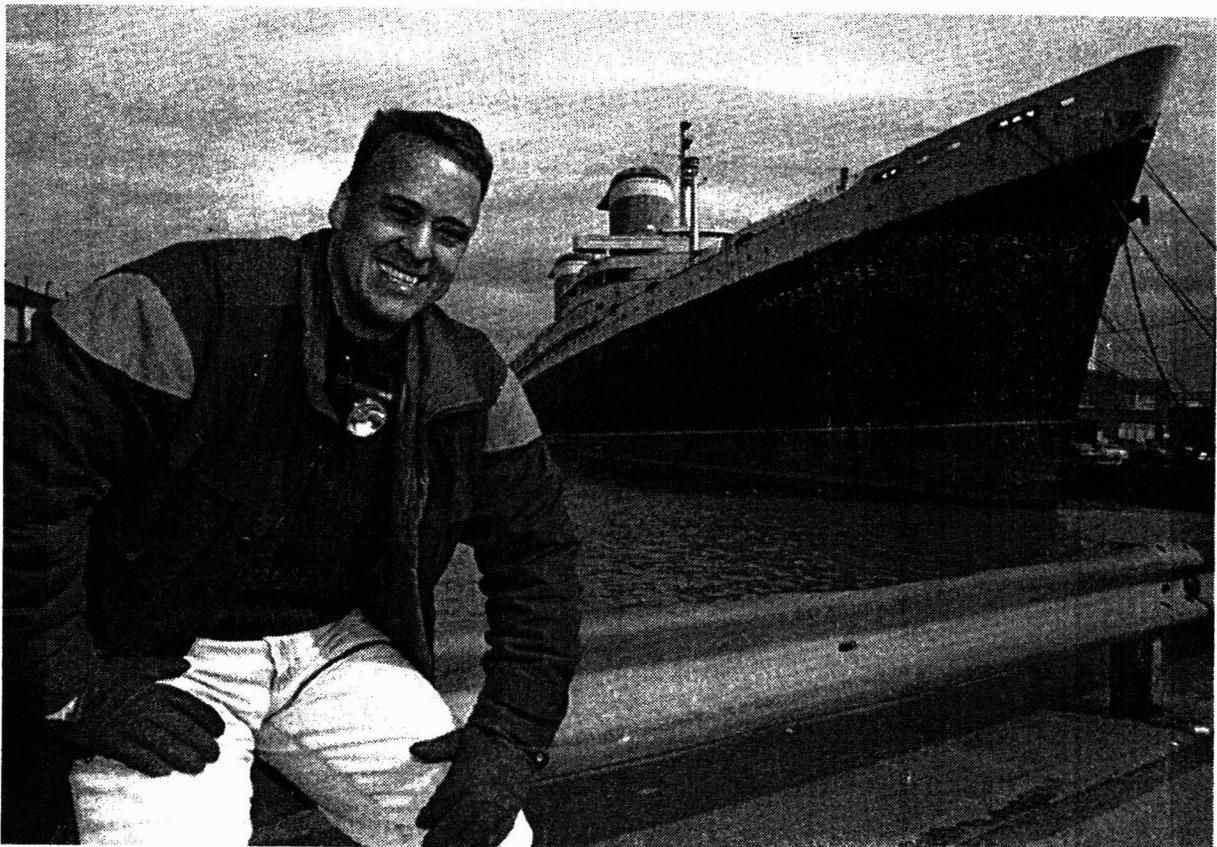
The New York Times

National Report

SUNDAY, APRIL 4, 1999

12 NE

Group Battles to Save Luxury Liner 'Big U,' and Glory of Its Day



Photographs by Timothy M. Shaffer for The New York Times

Robert Hudson Westover is leading an effort to preserve the liner United States, which is 17 stories high, weighs 59,000 tons and is 990 feet long. The ship, which made its first voyage in 1952, made its last in 1969.

By IVER PETERSON

PHILADELPHIA, April 2 — An enormous luxury liner lies empty and dark at the municipal pier here, pulling against its shore lines and straining, people who are fighting to save it say, for open water.

But seafaring is a distant past and unlikely future for the ship, the United States. The ship's paint is chipped and flaking, the lifeboats long gone, and even the reds, whites and blues of its raked funnels have faded into pastels.

The task facing the ship's owner and an avid band of preservationists is not focused on ocean voyages but simply on gaining a secure future for a behemoth that is 17 stories high, weighs 59,000 tons and stretches nearly 1,000 feet — or "110 feet longer than Titanic and she's still floating," as one slogan says.

"This ship is just too beautiful and

too important to let slip through our fingers," said Robert Hudson Westover, who has formed the S.S. United States Foundation and a Web site, SS-United-States.com, to raise money for the ship's preservation.

"She represents the finest American engineering and the fastest ocean travel of her day," Mr. Westover said. "I can't imagine people wouldn't care about that."

"Big U," as the ship came to be known to sailors, steamed out of New York on its first voyage on July 3,

1952, and passed Bishop's Rock off the coast of England 3 days, 10 hours and 40 minutes later, shaving 10 hours from the record the Queen Mary had held since 1938.

The ship's average speed was 35 knots, or 40 miles an hour, and its top speed was a national security secret in a day when passenger liners were still on reserve as troop carriers.

When the United States passed the Queen Mary on a later voyage, it radioed, "Sorry, old girl." The Queen Mary radioed back, "Your girls are faster than our girls."

The United States made 400 crossings before being pushed aside by jet travel in 1969, and its backers hope that fond memories among its one million passengers still living will help preserve the liner.

With the drama of the Titanic still in the air, and the fashion-conscious in love with retro style, the ship's owner and the preservationists are following a two-pronged campaign to give the ship a new life. While the owner looks for deals, Mr. Westover

An S O S to the fond memories of a million passengers of a special ship.



and a loose alliance of other fans of the ship are raising money to build a safety net under it.

Edward A. Cantor, a major developer of commercial real estate in northern New Jersey, bought the

United States in 1997 for \$6 million from one of several failed ventures that have tried to turn the ship into a commercial success.

Robert D. Fair, an engineer who supervises Mr. Cantor's interest in the ship, said several groups had presented different options, most of them with the goal of duplicating the role of the Queen Mary, now a successful hotel and convention center at Long Beach, Calif.

The United States was stripped of its fittings after the final voyage, in 1969, and Mr. Fair estimated that it would cost at least \$250 million to make the ship habitable. So, he was asked, was it profit or romance that lured Mr. Cantor to buy the ship and spend \$100,000 a month in wharfage, security, insurance and upkeep ever since?

"Romance is part of it," Mr. Fair

replied. "If it was just about money, he could have scrapped it when he didn't have so much invested and still taken a profit."

A possible solution was offered by Frank O. Braynard, a maritime museum curator at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, in Kings Point, N.Y., and the author of "The Big Ship," about the United States.

"The one hope is that New York City may do what California did with the Queen Mary and put her next to the carrier" Intrepid, a World War II ship that is a museum on a Hudson River pier in Manhattan, Mr. Braynard said. "But it would be a headache," he added, "because it's very, very expensive to keep a ship up."

Mr. Cantor is looking for buyers — the price is \$30 million, firm — but says he will listen to proposals for joint ventures.

Late last month, the Arnold Agency, a Richmond advertising firm, began creating material for a nationwide publicity campaign built around the theme "Save the United States."

But saving large artifacts from the age of steam is one of the most difficult tasks for preservationists these days, said Emory L. Kemp, a professor of history and civil engineering at West Virginia University, where he heads the Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archeology.

"There are a number of surviving battleships that are preserved by various states — the Texas, the North Carolina and the Massachusetts — but they are strictly tourist sites," Professor Kemp said.

At 990 feet, the United States is bigger than any American battleship; and to visitors who delve like spelunkers into the silent, cave-black lower decks, the ship presents an eerie and seemingly endless maze of heavy machinery, ladders, pipes and motors.

The reduction gears that drove the ship's four propeller shafts still glisten under bolted hatches. Engineers' reports, in pencil and fountain pen, still rest in filing cabinets next to the enormous boilers, and 30-year-old metal shavings are scattered around an industrial-sized lathe in the repair shop.

"Imagine how many people would love to see this," Mr. Westover said on a recent exploration. "It's like being underwater."

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Saturday, March 13, 1999 Published at 04:22 GMT

World: Americas

Ocean-liner monument bid

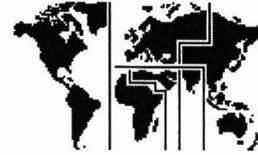
One of the last remnants of the golden age of trans-Atlantic ocean travel -- the SS United States -- may be preserved as a floating museum, after the vessel was nominated as a national treasure in the United States. The nomination is expected to be approved by the National Park Service.

The vessel now lies idle in Philadelphia in the state of Pennsylvania, but the ship's owner -- who is asking thirty-three million dollars for the vessel -- is expected to sell it to groups who will oversee its restoration.

The ocean-liner became the fastest in the world on its maiden voyage in 1952 and in its seventeen-year career carried more than a million people across the Atlantic.

Among them were some of the most famous people of the 1950s and '60s -- royalty, presidents and film stars.

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WIRE: March 12, 3:57 p.m. ET

SS United States may sail again, as a museum

REUTERS ●

RAW NEWS

PHILADELPHIA (Reuters) - The SS United States, the world's fastest ocean liner and one of the last great ships built before the jet age, moved a step closer to restoration after a state panel nominated her as a national treasure, officials said Friday.

Longer than the Titanic and more than 15 stories tall, the giant vessel carried over one million people across the Atlantic in the 1950s and 1960s, including glitterati of the age such as Britain's former King Edward and Mrs. Simpson, the woman he gave up the throne to marry, President John Kennedy and Hollywood legends Gene Kelly and John Wayne.

But for the last two years, she has stood largely unattended along the Delaware River in Philadelphia.

On Wednesday, her fortunes changed when the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission nominated the ship as a national treasure to be listed on the historical register. The nomination will be sent to the National Park Service, where it is widely expected to win approval.

"It's just a symbolic gesture," said Robert Westover, chairman of the Washington-based SS United States Foundation, a nonprofit group that wants the ship converted into a floating museum. "It's going to be great for us at the Foundation. It'll give us a lot of leverage in raising funds to get her saved." The SS United States, built for easy conversion into a troop carrier, became the fastest ocean liner on her maiden voyage in 1952 when she made the eastbound transatlantic crossing in three days, 10 hours and 40 minutes. She ended her service 17 years later in 1969.

Westover said hundreds of volunteers who want President Clinton to name the idle vessel as a national monument fear the ship's 50,000 tons of steel and aluminum could still be sold as scrap for an estimated \$8 million.

But the ship's owner, Edward Cantor, expects to sell the SS United States instead to a coalition of groups, including Westover's foundation, who will eventually restore her. The current asking price is \$33 million.

"There are several groups well on the way to achieving the funding necessary to do the restoration," said Robert Fair, a spokesman for Cantor. "This is an honor for the ship. It calls attention to the fact that she really was the pride of the American fleet."

^REUTERS@

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FROM PAGE 1A

Fighting to save 'The Big U'

Chances are you have never heard of the SS United States, but don't worry. You will.

The SS United States is in mothballs now — has been, really, since 1969 — but there is an effort to reclaim it as an historic national treasure by the year 2000.



BOB BESTLER

On the Loose

The 990-foot ship — 110 feet longer than the Titanic — was one of the last ocean liners built before the new age of commercial jets rendered ocean transportation obsolete.

Robert Hudson Westover, chairman of the Washington-based SS United States Foundation, says the Big U, as it is called, remains the fastest ship ever built, able to

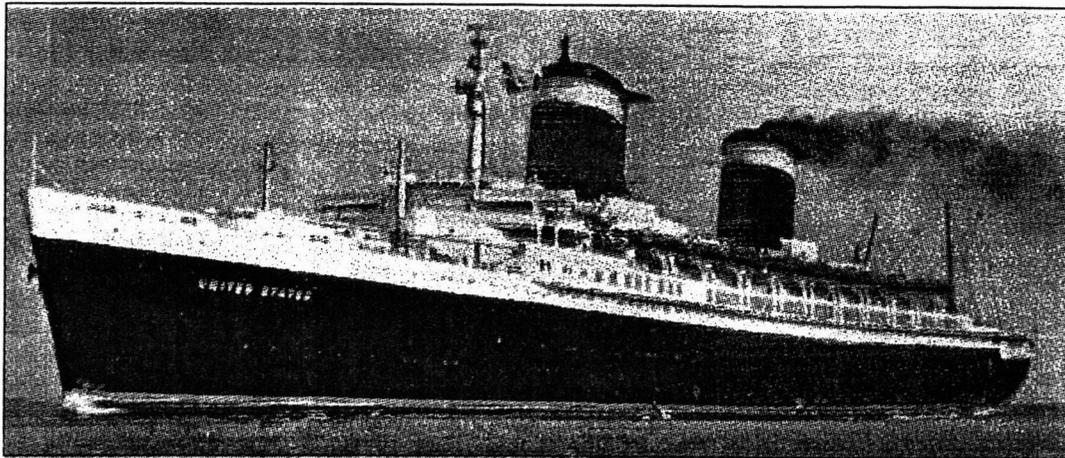
attain incredible speeds of up to 48 knots.

He credited its four Westinghouse turbine engines and an aluminium superstructure that brought its weight to 53,000 TON — as opposed to the 89,000 TON Queen Mary.

“The United States government paid two-thirds of the cost of the SS United States, and it still keeps the engine design classified,” Westover said. The hull design was classified, as well, but the secrecy has since been lifted.

On its maiden voyage in 1952, the SS

Please see BESTLER Page 9C



The SS United States, one of the last big ocean liners, was and still is the fastest ship ever built. It was retired in 1969, after just 17 years of service, and since has fallen into disrepair. A foundation wants to save the so-called "Big U" and turn it into a museum.

Foundation wants to save 'The Big U'

BESTLER From Page 1C

United States broke the trans-Atlantic record — without even trying, Westover said.

"They never went all out. The United States planned to use this ship to transport troops in an emergency and the government did not want the Soviet Union or anyone else to know how fast it could go."

■ ■ ■
The SS United States operated as an ocean liner for just 17 years. She was retired in 1969 — a year after a young Bill Clinton crossed the Atlantic aboard the SS United States.

Commercial efforts to utilize the magnificent ship since then have all failed. Today, the Big U is anchored at Pier 87 in Philadelphia, in serious disrepair.

Larry Driscoll, who has written extensively about the ship, offers this sad epitaph: "After 22 years of being moved from dock to dock, rusting and stripped of everything that could be moved or pulled off a wall, The United States was sold at an auction to pay for delinquent mooring fees."

■ ■ ■
The SS United States Foundation does not want that to be the final rites for the Big U.

It is working to have the ship placed on the National Register for Historic Places, an honor that was thwarted twice in 1998 by the ship's present owner after it was recognized by the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission.

Ideally, the foundation wants the ship declared a national monument and turned into a port-touring museum.

"If we cannot have her touring from port to port, then at least we want her to remain stationary — but as a museum first and foremost," Westover said.

Westover also lays out an ambitious \$50 million plan for the foundation to purchase the ship

and begin restoration itself.

A national fund-raising effort will begin once his foundation gains tax-exempt status.

■ ■ ■
David Nunnery of Pawleys Island, who belongs to the Titanic Historic Society, among others, said the Myrtle Beach-Georgetown-Charleston area was among possible East Coast home ports for the SS United States.

Nunnery himself has spent a lot of time on the SS United States, checking out every inch of it in the late '80s while it was open to visitors for \$5 during a stay at Newport News, Va.

Nunnery says he eventually hopes to get a local chapter of the SS United States Foundation going, but says right now people should address any questions to the national foundation.

Its address is P.O. Box 853, Washington, D.C. 20044. Telephone (703) 625-3037. Westover's e-mail address: rhwestover@worldnet.att.net.

■ ■ ■
As for Westover, he said the foundation had a plaque done commemorating the 1968 voyage of Bill Clinton, hoping to catch the attention of the president.

"We gave it to Ellen McCulloch-Lovell [director of the White House Millennium Council] to present to Clinton, but the impeachment hearings were getting under way and he had other things to worry about.

"But I think saving the SS United States is a perfect project that could bring the country together.

"This is not a political issue. We've got Republicans as well as Democrats fighting to preserve her as a museum.

"What better symbol of unification can there be than to rescue a ship called the SS United States?"

Sun News columnist Bob Bestler can be reached at (843) 626-0364 or bbestler@thesunnews.com



Auction aweigh for fastest ocean liner

December 28, 1998

BY JENNIFER BROWN ASSOCIATED Press

PHILADELPHIA--Want to buy the fastest ocean liner in the world?

The SS United States, once the only cross-Atlantic transport for the likes of Princess Grace, Elizabeth Taylor and President Kennedy, is for sale.

For about \$30 million--plus several times that amount in repairs--the retired steamship could become a first-class, 2,000-passenger cruise ship or a national monument and museum.

Commissioned as a joint venture between the Navy and ship designer Gibbs & Cox, the \$73 million SS United States set to sea in 1952, embodying America's postwar confidence. Built to rigorous military specifications, it broke the speed record for crossing the Atlantic Ocean on its maiden voyage: 3 days, 10 hours, 40 minutes.

"It's truly a national treasure, and should be returned to that," said Mike Alexander of Boulder, Colo., a former passenger who has become an ardent supporter.

Today, however, that goal seems remote for the stagnant ship. Gutted in 1995 to remove asbestos, it needs \$200 million to \$500 million in renovations--or about the cost of building a new ship.

"If someone doesn't come forward to buy and preserve her, the next owner will be a scrapper," said Bill DiBenedetto of Raleigh, N.C., president of the SS United States Preservation Society.

The SS United States was in service for 17 years, ferrying nearly every celebrity of the 1950s and '60s. Regulars included Grace Kelly, who honeymooned on the ship, and England's King Edward VIII.

Even then-Rhodes scholar Bill Clinton joined the ship's tourist class on his way to Oxford University in 1968.

The ship's austere luxury disguised its military prowess. It had a torpedo-resistant hull and double steam-powered engines that were considered classified military information until 1978. The SS United States was decommissioned in 1969--the year the first 747 airplane crossed the Atlantic--and shuffled between ports in Virginia, Turkey and Ukraine before coming to rest two years ago at Philadelphia's Pier 82.

DiBenedetto wants to create a stationary museum designated as a national monument.

Alexander hopes the ship will become a mobile museum, protected as a historic site but also carrying passengers. It also could be made into a docked convention center and hotel, like the RMS Queen Mary in Long Beach, Calif.

"This is something that I think should be shared by generations to come. It should be the possession of the American people," said Robert Westover, president of the SS United States Foundation, a sister organization of DiBenedetto's group.

Current owner Edward Cantor of Linden, N.J., supports restoration efforts, said his personal assistant Charlene Jacobs, but added that his first priority is to sell the ship. She said Cantor was too busy to be interviewed.

For now, supporters are hoping for a miracle. Neither of the ship's fan clubs could afford even the \$18,000-per-month pier bills and no other potential buyer has come forward.

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the story

Historic status may come to SS United States

by *Gloria Campisi*
Daily News Staff Writer

The SS United States - a rusting symbol of the glory days of posh ocean travel now floating dejectedly in the Delaware off Columbus Boulevard - likely will become a national historic treasure.

What the SS United States' addition to the National Historic Register will mean to its future still is unknown, 21/2 years after a New Jersey businessman and his partner saved it from the scrapheap of a Turkish shipyard and berthed it at Philadelphia.

Certification to the historic registry moved a step closer yesterday after the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board bowed to the wishes of a private group trying to save the ship and voted unanimously to recommend it for a place in the registry. The United States was a floating palace and the world's fastest ocean liner while it ran, from 1952 to 1969.

It fell victim to jet travel. It carried celebrities like Marilyn Monroe and U.S. presidents.

The National Park Service must make the final decision, but almost always goes along with the wishes of state boards, said Greg Ramsey of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. He expects a decision within two months.

Robert Fair, spokesman for co-owner Edward A. Cantor of Linden, N.J., said the vessel represents "American technology and ingenuity at its best," but added Cantor, a real estate developer, is paying thousands of dollars each month in docking fees at Pier 82.

Cantor is trying to sell the ship to undisclosed commercial interests, Fair said.

The SS United States Foundation of Washington, D.C., a private group that staged the fight to have the vessel declared historic, wants Cantor to give it the ship to use as a museum, in exchange for government tax breaks.

Normally additions to the historic register must be at least 50 years old but special exceptions can be made, Westover said. Cantor is free to do what he wants with the ship, even if it is certified historic, he said.

Send e-mail to campisg@phillynews.com

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● City Beat

Float This Boat

Preservationists hope to save the *S.S. United States*, currently berthed near Delaware Avenue, from the scrapyard.

by Jen Darr

With its faded red, white and blue funnels jutting into the sky, the *S.S. United States* is too imposing to overlook. Moored at Pier 82 along the Delaware River in South Philadelphia since 1996, the ship has silently weathered every snowfall, thunderstorm and heat wave.

But the ship is facing problems more acute than fading paint and rusting metal. After numerous failed attempts by commercial investors to save the *United States*, preservationists from all over the country are fighting to get it listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This designation could bring tax breaks, which might be the only way to save the historic vessel from the scrapyard. The Philadelphia Historical Commission was scheduled to consider the nomination Wednesday, but the ship's current owner, Edward A. Cantor of Linden, NJ, sought to postpone the hearing. However, as of presstime the nomination petition was still on the agenda.

Robert Westover, chairman and founder of the *S.S. United States* Foundation, which submitted the nomination petition, guesses that Cantor doesn't want the ship on the list because he's afraid of restrictions that often come with historic designation.



Ship Shape? The *S.S. United States* is visible from I-95 in South Philly

photo: Sandor Welsh

Cantor did not return numerous phone calls before press time.

Though it's now an empty, unseaworthy shell, the *United States* once carried movie stars and royals back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean. It also carried regular people, like Christal Rabuse, who sailed aboard the ship in 1961 when she was 28 years old. A native of Cologne, Germany, Rabuse had been living in Brooklyn with her husband and son and had become homesick. They booked a five-day trip on the *United States*.

But it was January, and the tail end of a typhoon tossed the vessel around in the water for three of the five days.

"We were very sick," Rabuse, 64, recalls in a telephone interview from Naples, FL, where she now lives.

She kept her spirits up during the tumultuous trip. "It was right around the time when Chubby Checker came out with 'The Twist,'" she explains, her accent still detectable. "They had ropes hanging from the ceiling so we could dance," she laughs.

The *United States* was the brainchild of Philadelphian William Francis Gibbs. He'd seen the luxury ocean liners *Mauretania* and *Lusitania* in the early 1900s and dreamed of building a bigger, faster ship.

On July 3, 1952, the *United States* sailed for the first time, dazzling the world with its speed and size. At 990 feet long, it was the largest passenger ship ever built (110 feet longer than *Titanic*). But because the ship's superstructure was constructed of aluminum, it was able to reach speeds over 30 knots. On its first trans-Atlantic voyage, it beat the *Queen Mary's* record by 10 hours.

The *United States* quickly became one of the most popular ocean liners. Passengers included John F. Kennedy, John Wayne, Queen Elizabeth, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Harry Truman, Marilyn Monroe and Princess Grace Kelly.

Despite its popularity, the *United States* was operating at a deficit as early as the late '50s, and was sold back to the Maritime Administration for the remaining mortgage in 1973. Westover points to the introduction of the jet, numerous strikes by the ship's crew and loss of government subsidies as contributing to the ship's demise.

In the '70s, the Navy considered converting the *United States* into a hospital ship, but decided the cost was too high. In 1980, U.S. Cruises bought the ship for \$5 million, with the intention of converting it into a Hawaiian cruise vessel, and auctioned off most of the interior. But U.S. Cruises could not afford the planned renovations, and it was sold again in 1992, taken to Turkey for asbestos removal and towed to Philadelphia in 1996 to be made into a cruise ship (Philadelphia's port was the only one

with a pier large enough to accommodate the ship). In '97, it was sold to Cantor for \$6 million.

Cantor has allowed Westover to go on board with architects and engineers, but still has not told the foundation what he plans to do with the ship.

"If he sells it, it's going to fall into the hands of someone who's going to sell it for scrap," Westover says.

With restoration costs estimated at \$100 million to \$500 million, the scrapyards doesn't seem that unlikely a possibility. Use restrictions that go along with placement on the National Register only apply if the owner accepts federal funds or tax breaks. If he doesn't, Cantor can do whatever he wants with the ship. And scrapping it could fetch him \$8 million - a \$2 million profit.

Westover remains optimistic. "Working for the National Endowment for the Arts, I've seen people raise more money than that." Ideally, he says, the foundation would like to turn the ship into a traveling museum.

This month, the *S.S. United States* Foundation will announce its nonprofit status, meaning that donations are 100-percent tax deductible. Notes Westover, "That's when the big donations start coming in."

It's likely that the ship will receive its place on the National Register of Historic Places. In January 1998, the National Trust for Historic Preservation recognized the *United States* as one of 30 nominees for the trust's 11 most endangered places list. "It was the fastest ship of its time," says Wayne Spilove, chairman of the Philadelphia Historical Commission. "It does have significance. It could be a big tourist attraction."

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THE WORLD'S FASTEST OCEAN LINER

SS United States is on the block

By JENNIFER BROWN
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Want to buy the fastest ocean liner in the world?

The SS United States, once the only cross-Atlantic transport for the likes of Princess Grace, Elizabeth Taylor and President Kennedy, is for sale — for about \$30 million, plus several times that amount in repairs.

Commissioned as a joint venture between the Navy and ship designer Gibbs & Cox, the \$73 million SS United States set to sea in 1952 embodying America's post-war confidence. Built to rigorous military specifications — and 110 feet longer than the Titanic — it broke the speed record for crossing the Atlantic Ocean on its maiden voyage: 3 days, 10 hours, 40 minutes.

"It's truly a national treasure, and should be returned to that," said Mike Alexander of Boulder, Colo., a former passenger who has become an ardent supporter. "A mobile national monument is the BEST OUTLET FOR THAT."

Today, however, that goal seems remote for the stagnant ship. Guted in 1995 to remove asbestos, it needs \$200 million to \$500 million in renovations — or about the cost of building a new ship.

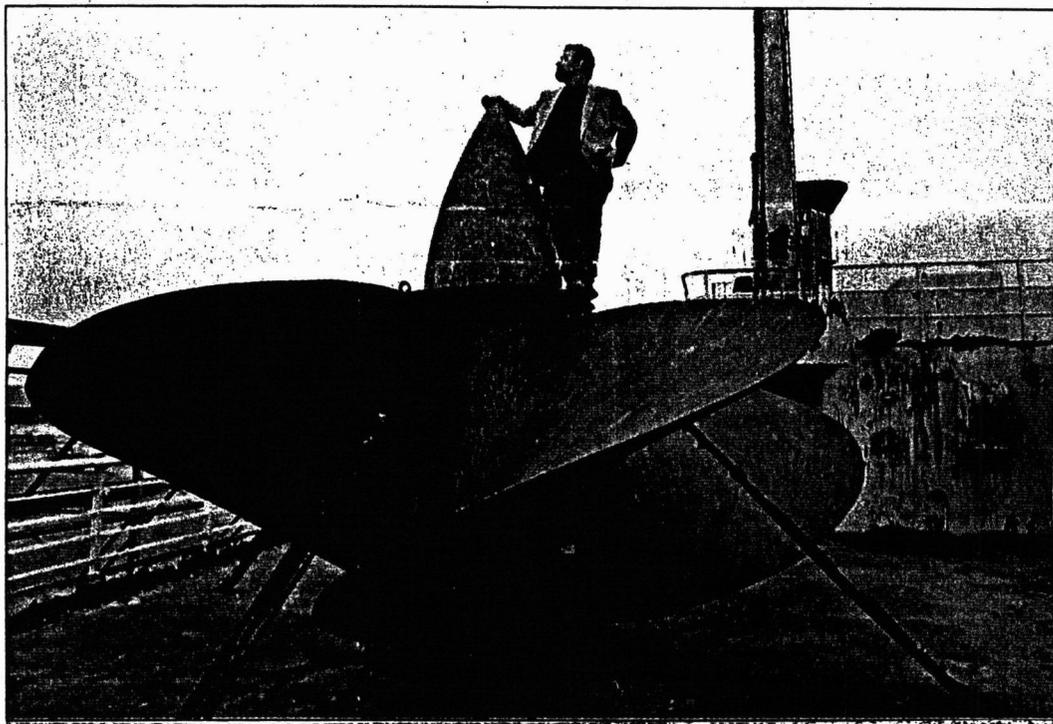
"If someone doesn't come forward to buy and preserve her, the next owner will be a scrapper," said Bill DiBenedetto of Raleigh, N.C., president of the SS United States Preservation Society.

The SS United States was in service for 17 years, crossing the North Atlantic more than 800 times and ferrying nearly every celebrity of the 1950s and '60s. Regulars included Grace Kelly, who honeymooned on the ship, and England's King Edward VIII, who snubbed British cruise lines after abdicating the throne to marry an American divorcee.

Even then-Rhodes scholar Bill Clinton joined the ship's tourist class — one step above the crew — on his way to Oxford University in 1968. The SS United States Foundation plans to present Clinton with a plaque commemorating that voyage.

The ship's austere luxury disguised its military prowess. It had a torpedo-resistant hull and double steam-powered engines that were considered classified military information until 1978. Its official top speed was about 38 knots, or 44 mph; present-day cruise ships average about 18 to 20 knots.

Though never called to battle, the ship could have been converted to transport up to 14,000 troops



Mike Alexander of Boulder, Colo., a former passenger on the ocean liner SS United States, stands on one of the ship's four propellers, stored on the deck of the ship in South Philadelphia. Alexander is an ardent supporter of the ship, which is for sale for \$30 million, but needs \$200 million to \$500 million in renovations.

FAMOUS PASSENGERS

John Wayne
Princess Grace
Jimmy Stewart
President and Mrs. Kennedy
Katharine Hepburn
Laurence Olivier
Red Skelton
Shirley MacLaine
palmer Salvador Dali
conductor Leopold Stokowski
conductor Leonard Bernstein
Irving Berlin
gospel singer Mahalia Jackson
Cary Grant
Jane Wyman
Tennessee Williams
Marlon Brando
Bob Hope
King Edward VIII
Rita Hayworth
statesman George C. Marshall
Billy Graham
Sean Connery
Bill Clinton

within 24 hours, Alexander said.

"She's really a wolf in sheep's clothing," Alexander said.

The SS United States was decommissioned in 1969 — the year the first 747 airplane crossed the Atlantic — and shuffled between ports in Virginia, Turkey

and Ukraine before coming to rest two years ago at Philadelphia's Pier 82.

DiBenedetto wants to create a stationary museum designated as a national monument. He imagines hundreds of maritime exhibits housed among the ship's 13 decks.

Alexander hopes the ship will become a mobile museum, protected as a historic site but also carrying passengers.

"This is something that I think should be shared by generations to come. It should be the possession of the American people," said Robert Westover, president of the SS United States Foundation, a sister organization of DiBenedetto's group.

Current owner Edward Cantor of Linden, N.J., supports restoration efforts but is not concerned about getting a historical designation right away, said his personal assistant Charlene Jacobs, adding that his first priority is to sell the ship. She said Cantor was too busy to be interviewed.

For now, supporters are hoping for a miracle. Neither of the ship's fan clubs could afford even the \$18,000-per-month pier bills and no other potential buyer has come forward.

"At this point, it's going to take a national movement," said DiBenedetto.

SS United States

SPECIFICATIONS

- **Size:** 17 stories tall, 990 feet long.
- **Service:** 1952-1969
- **Architect:** William Francis Gibbs
- **Accommodations:** 1,972 passengers in 695 state rooms; 1,044 crew.
- **Features:** Three dining saloons; 26 public rooms; three passenger bars; two theaters; heated seawater pool; 19 elevators; more than seven miles of walkways; more than five acres of open deck space.
- **Propulsion:** Geared steam turbine; oil fuel.
- **Maximum official speed:** 38.32 knots (44 mph); Top unofficial speed 44 knots (51 mph); Cruising speed 32 knots.
- **North Atlantic speed record:** 3 days, 10 hours, 40 minutes (maiden voyage)
- **Present location:** Pier 82, Philadelphia
- **Owner:** Edward Cantor, Cantor Affiliated Interests, Linden N.J.
- **Firsts:** First ocean liner with air conditioning in all passenger spaces; first ocean liner with ship-to-shore telephones in all state rooms; first ocean liner built to Navy standards; last super-passenger ocean liner built in the United States.

BOB BESTLER

On the Loose

published on Sunday 1-24-99

A recent column about saving the SS United States brought an extraordinary response from area people with personal memories of the now-mothballed ocean liner.

One of the letters came from Peter Levett of Little River, who sailed from England aboard the SS United States 42 years ago and has never forgotten it.

"We emigrated to the U.S.A. in 1956 and we sailed out of the port of Southampton, England, on Thursday Nov. 22, 1956, on the SS United States, arriving in New York four days later," he wrote.

"It was a wonderful trip on a very beautiful ship, an experience none of us will ever forget.

Memories of ocean liner surface

<http://vh1436.inf.net/news/0/stories/2114384.htm>

"It would be a great shame if this gracious ship ended up as scrap metal."

Levett and his wife, Penny, both admitted pack rats, were so impressed by the trip that they filled several pages of a photo album with pictures.

More importantly, they saved three menus from the four-day trip, each rich with entrees and appetizers and deserts.

The first day at sea was Thanksgiving Day, which was celebrated to the nines aboard the SS United States. For the Levetts and their two boys, now in their 50s, it was a feast unlike anything they had ever experienced.

"We didn't even know what Thanksgiving Day was, but we had never seen so much food in our lives," Penny said.

"In England, we were still just coming out of food rationing from the war [World War II] and had never eaten like we did on the United States."

The one-way trip for four cost about \$600, money that was paid by the American company that had hired Levett, a ceramics engineer. He later repaid the money in American dollars.

Levett, 77, who became a citizen in 1961, remembers the beauty of the ship, but also the friendliness of the American crew.

"Being proud British people, we had planned to take Cunard Lines [a British company] to New York," he said.

"But when we went to Cunard they couldn't be bothered with us. They didn't want to deal with a third party for payment. They said they were too busy.

"So we went over to SS United States, and they couldn't have been any nicer to us, even giving the kids lollipops. They were just so friendly and cooperative and it gave a really good impression of the United States."

□□□

Levett's was just one of the messages I received.

Another came from Robert Westover, a staffer with the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C., who is heading up the nonprofit SS United States Foundation.

Westover's group is trying to get the U.S. government to declare the SS United States a national monument. The 53,000-ton ship is now rusting at a pier in Philadelphia.

Westover's foundation wants to turn the 990-foot ocean liner _ the fastest ship ever built, capable of attaining speeds up to 48 knots _ into a museum, possibly a floating museum, for all of the public to enjoy.

"Your article was the best of any so far," he wrote. "Thanks so much."

□□□

Veritas M. Weaver, who lives in Conway, had many memories of the ship. Her father, a machinist, helped build the turbine engines on the SS United States and she relayed his pride in the ship when it first set sail.

"Sadly," she wrote, "a few years ago, my husband and I went to Williamsburg, Va., for a vacation and while we were there we took a tour of the harbor. George Bush was in office and Barbara had just christened the new carrier, the George Washington.

"During the tour, we saw this derelict ship at a pier. As we were approaching it my heart sank. I said to my husband that it looked like the United States, and to my dismay it surely was.

"I felt like crying. It brought to mind all the happy memories. I am so glad my father cannot know about it now."

□□□

Finally, there was this from Bob Bastian of Myrtle Beach:

"We have visited Philadelphia twice in the past year or so and both times drove down to ... see the United States. Although the ship looks bad, it is still impressive both in its tremendous size and its graceful lines.

"This ship is a symbol of a bygone era and should be restored and saved from the scrappers' torch.

Memories of ocean liner surface

<http://vh1436.inf.net/news/0/stories/2114384.htm>

However, one of my biggest fears is that someone in Little River may want to bring it down to the Strand as a casino boat!"

For more information on the SS United States, try www.3n.net/ssunited.

For more information on SS United States Foundation, call Robert Westover at (703) 625-3037 or e-mail him at rhwestover@worldnet.att.net.

Sun News columnist Bob Bestler can be reached at (843) 626-0364 or bbestler@thesunnews.com

The bigger-than-life Big U

I have just been reading the September issue of Soundings. On page 22 you have an article on the steamship United States. That must have been some ship. You say she had a forward speed of 50 mph and a reverse of 25 mph. This is unbelievable. Anyone standing on deck would have been blown overboard. Please drop me a line and tell me where you got this silly information.

DR. FRANCIS ALLANACH
Amelia Court House, Virginia

Editor's note: The ship actually topped out at better than 51 mph and went 25 mph in reverse during her sea trials. A ship would not attain such high speeds while cruising with passengers. The figures come from the ship's chief engineer, who was on board during the trials. Actual film footage of the trials can be seen at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va., where it is part of the SS United States exhibit in a gallery devoted to William Francis Gibbs, the naval architect who designed the ship. Also on display is one of the giant, 5-bladed propellers that drove the vessel.

I enjoyed Jack Sherwood's story on Big U. As a significant part of our U.S. history, I hope it has a future.

While memory is sometimes flawed, I think I was on I/C Cruise at the U.S. Naval Academy on board the USS Wisconsin scheduled to dock at Portsmouth Naval Yard in England in 1951. Standing a CIC (Combat Information Center) watch, at considerably farther away than the line of sight, we plotted two very fast, large ship contacts approaching the English Channel from the Atlantic, one at approximately 37 knots and the other, about a mile or two behind at 35.5 knots. The watch officers on the bridge questioned our U.S. Naval Academy "training" watch, as these were aircraft carrier speeds. The bridge knew that there were no British or American aircraft anywhere in the area. But we verified the radar contacts. When the contacts came into sight, they were the United States only a few miles ahead of the Queen Elizabeth, with the United States setting the new trans-Atlantic record.

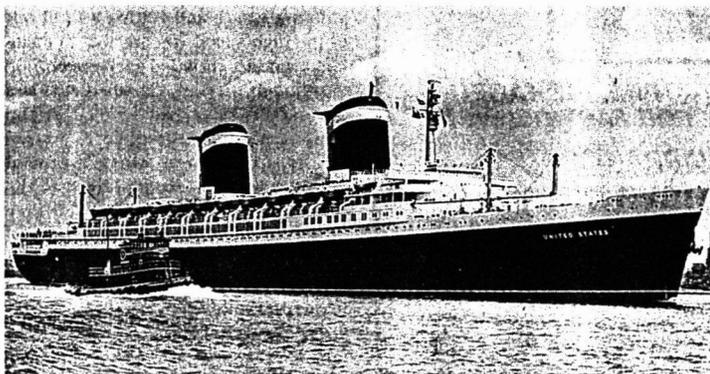
It was exciting because our radar training plots were doubted until eye-sight proved our high-speed contacts, maintaining what was then nearly aircraft carrier speeds.

It was a good article and I hope the United States can be saved.

J. WILLIAM SHERAR
Covington, La.

Editor's note: The record-setting voyage of the SS United States actually took place in the summer of 1952.

Thank you for publishing the Jack Sherwood article, "Big U: forgotten, but floating." The SS United States deserves this and much more publicity. She is the Mount Vernon of U.S. oceanliners — truly the first and last and only one of her kind in the world. Certainly, she would make the world's most unique



national monument if saved.

In your next issue, it might be helpful to the ship and efforts on her behalf if you would share this Web address with your readers: <http://ss-united-states.com>.

I am the author of this site and photographed the Web sites' many current interior and exterior photos of the S.S. United States. Thanks again for giving a voice to this great ship.

MIKE ALEXANDER
Denver, Colo.

Thank you very much for a wonderfully detailed article. I have been hoping for quite some time to see this fine ship brought back to life.

One thing shocked me, however. The caption to the photo stated that the United States weighed more than the Titanic.

Passenger ships are measured by gross registered tons, which are measurements of volume, not weight or mass. She may measure more than the Titanic, but no ship person would ever say she weighed more.

FRED CHERNEY
Scarborough, Ontario

I want to take a moment to thank your publication for printing such a well-researched article about the superliner SS United States. As chairman of a foundation designed to bring awareness to this ship's unique place in history I have encountered much disbelief that a ship built 46 years ago could still be the fastest vessel of its size ever constructed. But this is true.

In Mr. Sherwood's article he quotes the speed of the ship at 50 mph. Actually, when opened up in her sea trials, she went an amazing 44.7 knots [51.4 mph]! Speculation abounds about what speed she could actually produce if given the proper screws.

I only know this: Each of her Westinghouse turbines could, on its own, move the vessel at 20 knots if need be. She has four turbines — it doesn't take a

might have knowledge of this to let us know. The answers may help bring a clearer understanding as to why this ship's speeds and designs are so legendary.

ROBERT HUDSON WESTOVER
CHAIRMAN
SS UNITED STATES FOUNDATION
P.O. Box 853
Washington, D.C. 20044
(703) 625-3037

A boater from way back

Just a short line to say thanks for the Fred Miller article on page 34 of the September issue ("Chris-Craft's popular 'transition' boat").

I found it very interesting — so much so that I was able to locate Don Davis, to whom he referred in the article.

Keep up the good work! Boats have been a major interest of mine since I learned to sail in 1932 in my dad's 12-foot gaff-rigged sneakbox on Barnegat Bay (N.J.).

CLIFFORD KINGSTON
Sherwood Forest, Md.

Chinese puzzle

Greetings from Tierra Verde, Fla., where we subscribe to Soundings. We are faithful subscribers and enjoy your publication very much.

In the October issue of Soundings, we particularly enjoyed the "Bay Tripper" column by Jack Sherwood on naming boats. We agree totally that a boat should not go unnamed, but for our new 240 Chaparral we struggled to select one. We compiled a list of about 40 choices surrounding family, business or Asia, where we had previously lived for eight years. After much frustration and no name selected, we finally decided to add MO MING HO to her transom. You see, the Chinese "mo ming ho" means "no name boat." We have great fun answering that question.

JOHN N. ANDERSON
Tierra Verde, Fla.

Stepping up

Regarding your informative piece on stepped hulls ("Here's how it works," July, 1998, page 31), the second paragraph concludes, "as lift increases, the hull rises slightly above the water's surface and planing begins."

I didn't know steps were that effective. Man that's really flying!

GEORGE A. DANKERS, JR.
Mitchellville, Md.

Kalanis hills

View off Long Island in 17 fathoms with Fire Island Light bearing N.W. by N.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

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CHRIS SATULLO, *Deputy Editorial Page Editor*
ACEL MOORE, *Associate Editor*

E6

Sunday, May 17, 1998

Americans, save your ship!

I must wholeheartedly disagree with Constance D. Stevens about the SS United States ("Never great, this hunk of junk should be sunk," May 3).

While some claimed the ship was too metallic and unposh, others, including the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, made it their only way to cross.

A possible explanation for Stevens' unpleasant crossing may be the year that she crossed. The ship's last two years of service (1968-69) were plagued by union troubles — so much so that voyages were nearly canceled.

Proof of this requires a visit to the ship. In March, I spent a weekend aboard the ship for the filming of a documentary. While exploring the lower decks, I found several walls filled with disgruntled seamen's graffiti. Complaints about excessive hours worked and unfair wages, along with their names and dates, are scattered throughout the crew spaces. The dates I saw were exclusively from 1967 to 1969.

The United States is a magnificent ship. She was given your country's name because she represented everything American: size, speed, power and beauty.

Her red, white and blue funnels (the largest in the world) proudly show her

nation's colors. In her 17 years of service, she never experienced an engineering failure. The Queen Elizabeth 2, on the other hand, was so plagued with turbine troubles that they were replaced with diesel-electric units in 1986.

The United States is a long-neglected national treasure that should be saved and restored. Despite the rust and flaking paint, she is still one of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring creations I've ever seen.

When I was aboard the ship, I met Robert H. Westover, who has just established a nonprofit foundation that hopes to save the ship and, with national support, return her to service as a national monument. The ship would be a living memorial, stopping at port cities all over the United States and the world.

Many believe that would be impossible considering the ship's condition. My response: Only in America could a ship like this have been built — and only in America can a ship like this be saved.

For more information on the foundation, call 703-625-3037.

Michael Alfano
Sault Ste. Marie
Ontario, Canada
mallano@soonet.ca

A12 Friday, June 19, 1998

Daily Press

Kathleen M. Waltz
President and Publisher

Will F. Corbin
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Will Molineux
Editor of the Editorial Page

Wayne J. Dawkins and Susie L. Dorsey
Associate Editors of the Editorial Page

EDITORIALS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Save the superliner

I have been obsessed with the SS United States since childhood and after several years of hearing nothing but bad news about her, I have vowed to do whatever I can to help save this beautiful ship.

In March, I was invited to Philadelphia for the shooting of a documentary that was filmed aboard the ship. After spending the weekend aboard this magnificent ship, I am convinced that she must be saved.

When I first stepped aboard, and for quite some time afterward, I was speechless. Despite the rust and flaking paint, it was the most beautiful, awe-inspiring ship I've ever seen.

After all these years of neglect, she still sits proud and beautiful. Also, reports of her interior being torn apart are inaccurate.

The asbestos is removed and her interiors resemble a construction project in progress rather than in demolition.

While in Philadelphia I also met Robert Westover, who has created a non-profit corporation called the SS United States Foundation which is

based in Washington, D.C. The foundation hopes, with national support, to return America's superliner to service as a national monument, and thus save her from the uncertain future that she faces.

The first board meeting will take place in Washington on June 19.

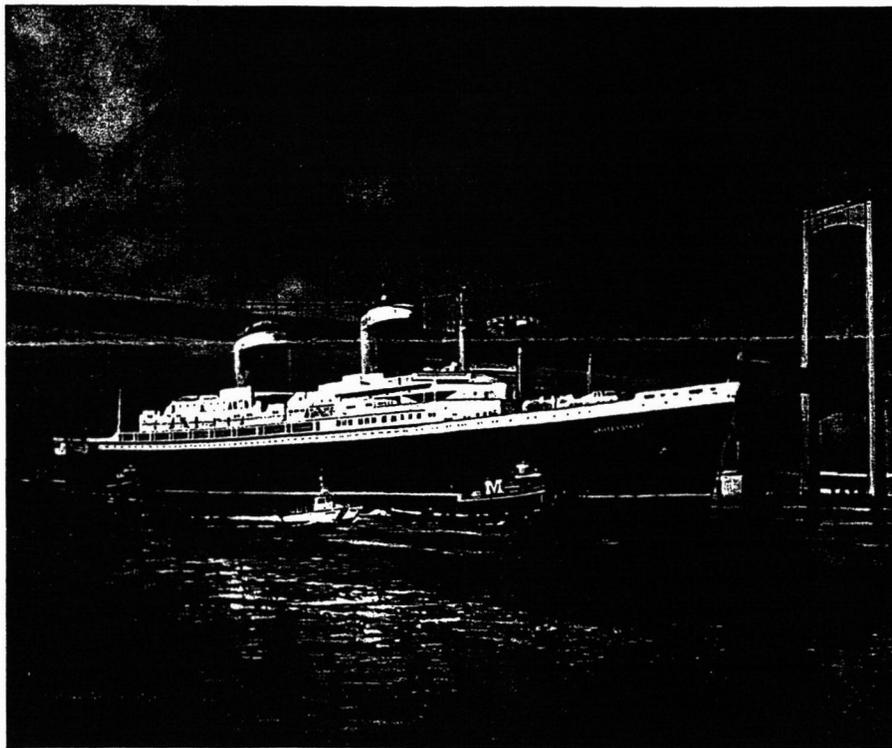
The problem we're faced with is that so few Americans know that this great ship exists. She is definitely a national treasure that should be saved and honored.

She wears your country's name because she represents everything American: size, power and sheer beauty. Many believe that such a restoration project would be nearly impossible.

My response: Only in America could such a ship have been built and, so too, only in America could such a ship be saved! Please, show your support for saving the SS United States by contacting the foundation: SS United States Foundation, P.O. Box 853, Washington, D.C. 20044, or calling 1 (703) 625-3037.

Michael Alfano
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada

Mailbox



A Once Proud Lady by Robert Semler, shows the liner SS United States entering the port of Philadelphia in 1996. Oil on canvas, 18"x24".

Hope For 'Big U'

I am pleased to inform you that the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has approved the nation's flagship, the great SS *United States* for placement on the National Register of Historical Places! The only other ocean liner to have ever been recommended for registration is the RMS *Queen Mary* in Long Beach. Many long hours of devotion to saving this, the most magnificent ship ever built, are now paying dividends. But this is just the beginning. National Registration status, will not prevent "Our Lady of the Seas" from destruction, or being sold to overseas interests.

Her official recognition as a National Treasure will only be of assistance to bring awareness to the public of her plight—but what awareness this is. The SS *United States* Foundation is moving ahead with many more strategies. This

latest move provides inspiration to all SSUS devotees both in this country and internationally who have labored to save this symbol of American genius at its best. Tireless efforts have allowed us to achieve this, and other victories for the Big U. I'm honored, beyond what words can express, for playing such a role in the survival of this, the apex of maritime engineering—and still the undisputed sovereign of the seas.

With elation,

Robert Hudson Westover
Executive Director
SS United States Foundation
P.O. Box 853
Washington DC 20044-0853

Pilothouse Eagles

I've always had an affinity for old steam vessels, particularly steam tugs. One of the more interesting decorations I have notice in paintings and old photographs

are the lovely carvings of eagles perched atop the pilothouse. What is the tradition of this custom which seems to have passed with the age of steam?

Larry Butler
Newmarket, New Hampshire

We too can not help but admire old photos and paintings of steamships and tugs with ornamentation such as eagles. While many of the sea's traditions are easy to pinpoint, it is not the case with pilothouse eagles. Superstition may be an answer; the eagles may be a carry-over from figureheads found on sailing and some steam ships. This is an interesting explanation since the advent of the tug coincided with the transition from sailing ships to steamships—and the passing of the figurehead. Also, tugmen were fiercely proud of their vessels and while there are many examples of tug adornment, eagles appearing atop the wheelhouse, are probably among them. (Marine artist and tug expert Steve Cryan told us that he has seen photographs of cigar store Indians and even a rooster in this place of honor.) With "progress," however, these magnificent icons were likely displaced as tugs began to be equipped with searchlights and fire monitors. -Ed



Pilothouse eagles, sometimes referred to as wheelhouse or cabin-top eagles, are a grand symbol of a rich nautical tradition. They were either carved or cast iron and often come up for sale. This detailed 19th-century example sold at auction for \$2,200 at the November 1997 Americana & Marine Art sale at Robert C. Eldred Co. in East Dennis, Massachusetts. Photo courtesy of Eldred's.

Search Results

3 articles matching ""SS United States Foundation"" and date(1999)" were found.

Returning 3 articles.

List of Articles

Article 1 of 3, Article ID: 9901250031

Published on 01/24/99, THE SUN NEWS

MEMORIES OF OCEAN LINER SURFACE(ON THE LOOSE)

A recent column about saving the SS United States brought an extraordinary response from area people with personal memories of the now-mothballed ocean liner.

One of the letters came from Peter Levett of Little River, who sailed from England aboard the SS United States 42 years ago and has never forgotten it.

Your search terms appear 8 times in this article.

[Complete Article, 779 words \(\\$1.95\)](#)

Article 2 of 3, Article ID: 9901130009

Published on 01/13/99, THE SUN NEWS

FIGHTING TO SAVE `THE BIG U'(ON THE LOOSE)

Chances are you have never heard of the SS United States, but don't worry. You will.

The SS United States is in mothballs now - has been, really, since 1969 - but there is an effort to reclaim it as an historic national treasure by the year 2000.

Your search terms appear 12 times in this article.

[Complete Article, 732 words \(\\$1.95\)](#)

Article 3 of 3, Article ID: 9901040430

Published on 01/03/99, POST-TRIBUNE (GARY, IN)

ANCHOR'S AWAY! THE S.S. UNITED STATES IS UP FOR SALE

Want to buy the fastest ocean liner in the world?

The SS United States, once the only cross-Atlantic transport for the likes of Princess Grace, Elizabeth Taylor and President Kennedy, is for sale.

For about \$30 million - plus several times that amount in repairs - the retired steamship could become a first-class 2,000-passenger cruise ship, a national monument and museum, or a military transport ship for up to 14,000 troops.

Your search terms appear 8 times in this article.

[Complete Article, 794 words \(\\$1.95\)](#)

Search Results

2 articles matching ""SS United States Foundation"" and date(1998)" were found.

Returning 2 articles.

List of Articles

Article 1 of 2, Article ID: 1998362056

Published on 12/28/98, THE BALTIMORE SUN

Liner SS United States for sale for \$30 million Ship decommissioned in 1969 repairs would cost millions of dollars

PHILADELPHIA -- Want to buy the fastest ocean liner in the world?

Your search terms appear 4 times in this article.

[Complete Article, 866 words \(\\$1.95\)](#)

Article 2 of 2, Article ID: 9811170246

Published on 11/16/98, PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

NEW HOPE FOR FADING SS UNITED STATES

TEXT: After two years of rusting away on the Delaware, the SS United States has a ray of hope.

Two parties are trying to buy the once majestic ship for \$30 million, according to Robert Fair, a spokesman for Edward Cantor, the co-owner of the ship.

Your search terms appear 4 times in this article.

Federal Recognition



WHITE HOUSE
MILLENNIUM COUNCIL

Honor the Past—Imagine the Future

January 18, 1999

Mr. Robert Hudson Westover
Chairman
SS United States Foundation
P.O. Box 853
Washington, DC 20044

Dear Mr. Westover:

Thank you very much for delivering me information regarding the SS United States. Our office continues to be impressed with the vessel's rich history and wide support. As a colleague in the cause of historic preservation, I share your concern and the concern of your foundation to ensure the survival of this national treasure for future generations.

We will keep the information on file for reference as we plan future "Save America's Treasures" visits with the First Lady across the nation.

I have forwarded the SS United States commemorative item and the copy of Flood Tide to the President. I am confident that he will enjoy them both.

I enjoyed our brief discussion at the ceremony for Bill Ivey and look forward to speaking with you again regarding our mutual interest in historic preservation.

Sincerely,

Ellen McCulloch-Lovell
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Advisor to the First Lady on the Millennium

White House Millennium Council
708 Jackson Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20503
Tel: 202-456-2000 Fax: 202-456-2008

e-mail: millennium@whitehouse.gov
<http://www.millennium.whitehouse.gov>

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Copy

October 1, 1998

Thank you for taking the time to write to us regarding your suggestion for the "Save America's Treasures" initiative. We have been receiving an overwhelming number of responses in regard to the S.S. United States. You have conveyed to us the urgency of restoring this great ship. I am well informed of the strong support for this national treasure.

The overall theme of the White House Millennium Council is "Honor the Past - Imagine the Future." The President and First Lady are inviting states, communities, nonprofit organizations, federal agencies, youth groups and all citizens to join together to participate in activities that strengthen democracy, improve communities and give lasting gifts to the future. The role of the White House Millennium Council is to set themes, involve the federal government, and invite the American people to engage in meaningful activity to mark this historic time.

As a part of this effort, President Clinton proposed in his budget a Millennium Fund to "Save America's Treasures." The fund would be administered through the Department of the Interior and the State Historic Preservation Officers. The National Trust for Historic Preservation is leading the private efforts to "Save America's Treasures."

Your interest in the S.S. United States stands as a wonderful example of the kind of commitment to historic preservation that we hope will mark the nation's millennial celebrations. We will certainly keep your information on file as we plan future Save America's Treasures tours.

If you would like to stay informed about future activities regarding our Council, please visit our website for frequent updates (www.whitehouse.gov/Initiatives/Millennium).

Thank you again for writing and best of luck with your work.

Sincerely,



Anne F. Donovan
Deputy Director
White House Millennium Council

A letter from Senator Biden sent to a volunteer of the foundation

I would like to thank you for your letter I received from Tom Lewis. (Del/Office) I appreciated the information and I was Interested to learn more about the SS United States.

I have asked my staff to contact the National Park Service for more information about the issues raised in Mr. Westover's letter included in your correspondence. As soon as I hear from them, I will be back in touch with you.

Thanks again for your letter. I look forward to seeing you soon. Best wishes to you and yours for the happiest of holidays.

Sincerely,

**Joseph R. Biden, Jr
United States Senator**

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3403

September 18, 1998

The Honorable Roger Kennedy
Director
National Park Service
1849 C. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Dear Director Kennedy:

I am writing on behalf of a constituent, _____, who is interested in having the S.S. _____ United States listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as naming it a National Landmark. It is my understanding that this ship made 400 crossings of the Atlantic Ocean before it was decommissioned in 1969. I respectfully encourage you to consider adding this ship to the National Register and naming it a National Landmark.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



KENT CONRAD
United States Senate

KC:wllz

**The United States Foundation on the
Internet**

A Tour of the SS UNITED STATES by Bill Tilley

The following is an account of my visit to the SS UNITED STATES this past Saturday. (11/21/98) In it you will discover that I am no engineer, analyst, or sailor; just a person who loves ships! In particular the UNITED STATES. (Editor's Note: Bill posted this account on Liners, and it is reproduced here with his permission.)

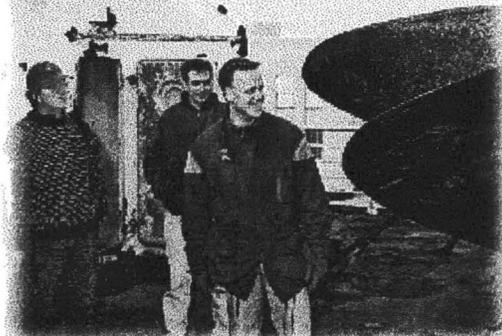
When the UNITED STATES arrived in Philadelphia in 1996, it was a complete surprise. I had been deeply into hatching out a career as a musician and landscape water colorist at the time of the ships arrival under tow from Turkey, and liners had not been on my agenda in a big way for years. Her arrival here revived my passion again, and it will never go astray.

For two years I had been looking at the UNITED STATES like most people; through a security fence at pier 82 along the Delaware River. Now the opportunity arose for a group of five of us to board her and be guided by Mike Alexander, whose web site on the SS UNITED STATES is an internet staple for people looking for the most substantial e-info available on the ship. I would like to publicly thank Mike for making this visit possible and for his inestimable efforts to bring the UNITED STATES to life again.



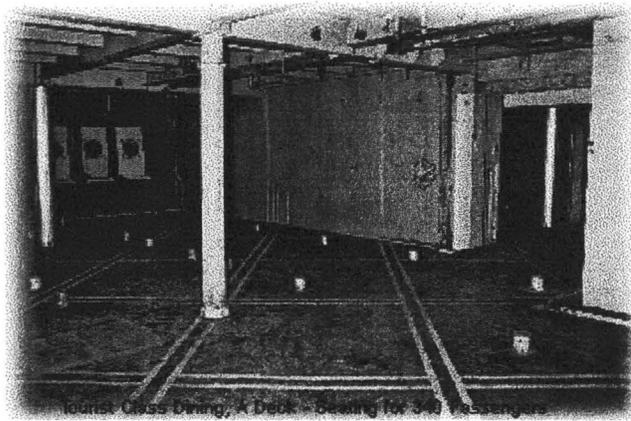
I showed up at pier 82 at 8:00 am on Saturday, and mercifully, the cloudy rainy night before had cleared, and the sun was promising a good day. Mike and I joined first, with the others in the group to follow later. I was looking forward to meeting Robert Westover, the executive director of the United States Foundation, and most of all, Henry E. Buttlemann, the current President of Gibbs & Cox, the firm that designed the SS UNITED STATES, of course. Mr. Buttlemann had been William Francis Gibbs' assistant back when the UNITED STATES was being built, so I was more than eager to meet him!

At 60,000+ lbs each, Big U props are 18-feet in diameter



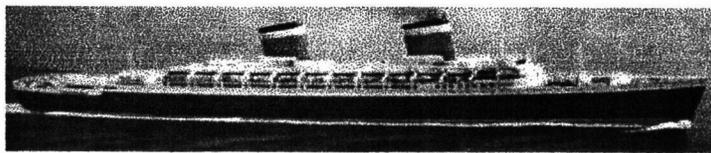
Iver, Bill and R. Westover of the SS United States Foundation

As each new member of the group joined us it was necessary to revisit parts of the ship I had seen already, but this was not a problem!



We made our way back to the engine rooms, and in fact I think it was the wider forward of the two that we saw this time. If I have one regret about the day, it was that in my effort to take in as much visually on the ship, I often tuned out of the conversations, a warm body among the group, hypnotized by my surroundings.

Press Release



THE SS UNITED STATES FOUNDATION

a non-profit, all volunteer organization

P.O. Box 853, Washington DC, 20044-0853

703-625-3037

e-mail rhwestover@worldnet.att.net

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Robert Hudson Westover

703-625-3037

SS United States is unanimously nominated to the National Register of Historic Places

Washington DC—It's difficult getting something nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. It's even more difficult if the site is less than fifty years old (the minimum age requirement) and it's almost impossible if it's a movable site. Despite all these obstacles, the SS United States Foundation has done just this. The national flagship is headed for listing on one of the most important Registries in the country.

In a vote earlier this month the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission followed the example of the prestigious Philadelphia Historic Commission and unanimously nominated the national flagship, the ocean liner United States, for the Register. The nomination now goes to Washington DC where the Secretary of the Register will review the nomination. A step regarded mainly as a formality as the Register very rarely rejects a nomination from a state commission.

"I'm elated. This will bring us incredible leverage in fund raising efforts. This brings us that much closer to having an engineering wonder of the world declared a national monument--giving our national flagship back to the American people," Robert Hudson Westover, founding chairman of the foundation said in an interview.

For nearly two decades from 1952 to 1970 the SS United States, or the "Big U" as her supporters often refer to the ship, was America's floating ambassador to the world. She carried four Presidents including Harry S. Truman and Dwight Eisenhower. Anyone who was anybody booked passage on this mighty ship—the fastest ship in the world. Walt Disney, Elizabeth Taylor, Judy Garland, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Salvador Dali and John Wayne were just a few of the hundreds of rich and famous who "crossed" from New York to Europe.

In 1968 a young Rhodes Scholar, named Bill Clinton, booked passage on his way to England on board the national flagship—tourist class, of course.

Edward Cantor of Cantor Affiliated Interest, the current owner of the ship, has twice deferred placement of the SS United States on the Register. However, on the third try by

the foundation he did not thwart the non profits year long effort to bring this much need recognition to the ship.

However, Cantor reminds callers, the United States is still up for sale to the highest bidder. Listing on the Register does not effect his ownership in any way. He is free to sink the ship if he desires, Westover points out.

“This is the fastest moving object of its size ever built. Nothing--in 47years--has out paced her, Westover said.

“No other ship, even those half her size, have come close to her speed of over 44 knots— she is faster than a nuclear powered air craft carrier,” (see attached legend) Laura Jadwin Bachko, daughter of the ship’s Chief Engineer said. Bachko is President of the SS United States Foundation.



Robert Westover and Laura Bachko in front of the vessel’s commissioning plaque.

“To lose her would be a national embarrassment,” Westover said. “She is too important to our history. This ship represented all that can be dreamed and all that can be accomplished. She belongs to the American people.”

Horribly mistreated by some owners since her retirement in 1970, and completely stripped of her interior, the SS United States stands as a sad testament of neglect and regret. The only ocean liner permitted under federal law to travel from port to port within the United States, the SS United States is still the nation’s flagship.

The cost of refurbishing the SS United States to her former glory is estimated to be over \$100 million. Other estimates for permanently docking the ocean liner, like the Queen Mary in Long Beach, and refitting her as a floating museum, are far less (around \$50 million) according to Westover. The SS United States Foundation is currently leading the fight to save the SS United States, and has suggested the idea of making her a floating and port touring museum.

Westover added that this concept of a floating/touring museum of American maritime

achievement would be an unprecedented concept in museums. Port's hosting her around the country, for several weeks at a time, could have tours for school children and maritime enthusiasts. A permanent staff would travel with her as she toured, the way cruise ships now handle their crews. And, since she would be a living museum she could take day excursions, letting visitors feel the ride of a 990 ft., 53,000 ton vessel that is as high as a 17 story building, cut through the water.

Since her interior has already been prepared for refitting, the SS United States Foundation is seeking to have the vessel restored with modern technological equipment (i.e. wiring her for fiber optics and installing modern plumbing etc...). Her power train—a marvel of mechanical engineering and craftsmanship—would remain untouched.



The SS United States in its current condition at pier 82 in Philadelphia.

The present purpose of the SS United States Foundation is to create national awareness of the plight of the flagship. “She has become a victim of the intense security surrounding her since her first blueprints were classified as top secret by the Pentagon,” Westover said. “Too many know far too little about this mighty vessel and her legacy to maritime achievement.”

In his closing comment Westover said: “The Big U is a triumph of maritime engineering, an accomplishment still envied by the world, lets not let her end up as just something read about in history books.”

Ship Legend

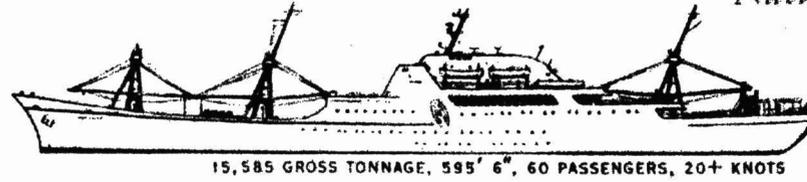
These legends, published by National Geographic, verify that the SS United States is in fact the fastest ship in the world--either merchant or military--ever built and the fastest moving object of its size ever constructed.

(This section also contains a fax written by the designer of the QEII)

Merchant Profiles 1819-1972

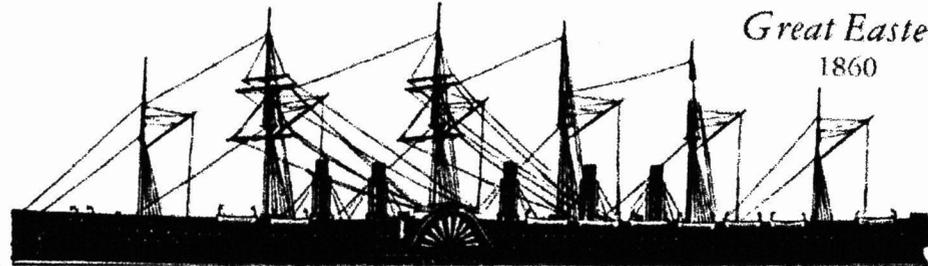
ALL DRAWN TO SAME SCALE
 DATE: YEAR SHIP ENTERED SERVICE
 LENGTH: OVERALL
 SPEED: MAXIMUM
 TONS DISPLACEMENT: WEIGHT OF LOADED SHIP
 TONS DEADWEIGHT: WEIGHT OF CARGO
 GROSS TONNAGE, TONS BURDEN: CUBIC CAPACITY

Nuclear Ship Savannah
1962



15,585 GROSS TONNAGE, 595' 6", 60 PASSENGERS, 20+ KNOTS

Great Eastern
1860



22,500 GROSS TONNAGE, 692', 4,000 PASSENGERS, 14 KNOTS

M. Moran
1961



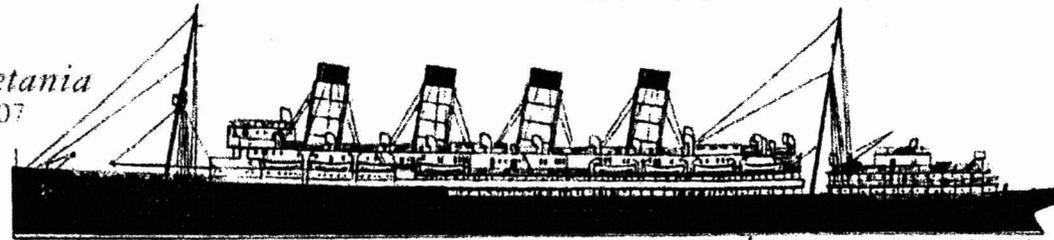
SEAGOING TUG, 120',
11+ KNOTS

Savannah
1819



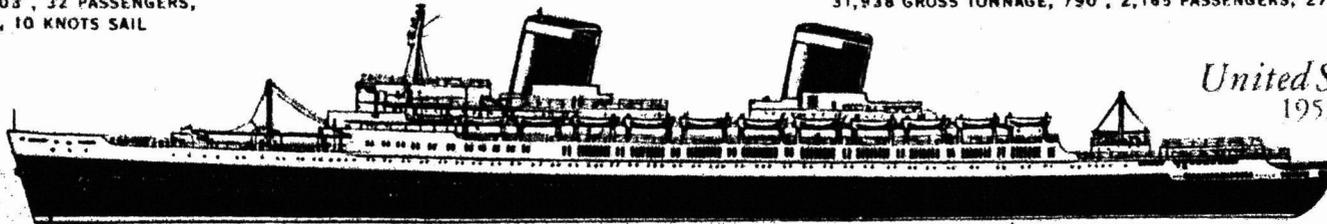
TONS BURDEN, 103', 32 PASSENGERS,
8 KNOTS STEAM, 10 KNOTS SAIL

Mauretania
1907



31,938 GROSS TONNAGE, 790', 2,165 PASSENGERS, 27 KNOTS

United States
1952



50,924 GROSS TONNAGE, 990', 1,930 PASSENGERS, 42 KNOTS

Queen Elizabeth 2
1969

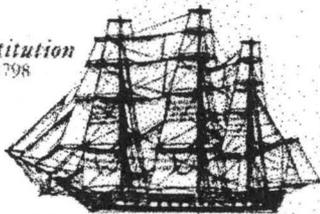


65,863 GROSS TONNAGE, 963', 1,870 PASSENGERS, 32 KNOTS

Naval Profiles

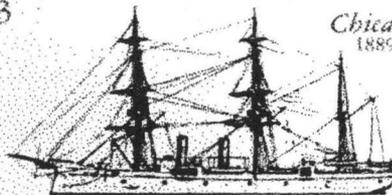
1798-1973

Constitution
1798



FRIGATE, 2,200 TONS, 204', 12+ KNOTS

Chicago
1889



PROTECTED CRUISER, 4,500 TONS, 342' 2", 14 KNOTS

Monitor
1862



IRONCLAD, 987 TONS, 173', 8+ KNOTS

Maine
1895



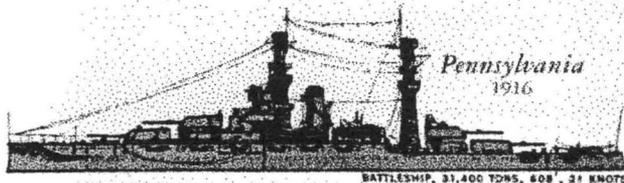
SECOND-CLASS BATTLESHIP, 6,682 TONS, 319', 17 KNOTS

Maryland
1905



ARMORED CRUISER, 13,800 TONS, 503' 11", 22 KNOTS

Pennsylvania
1916



BATTLESHIP, 31,400 TONS, 608', 21 KNOTS

Hatfield
1920



DESTROYER, 1,215 TONS, 314' 6", 35 KNOTS

LST 1
1942



LANDING SHIP, TANK, 4,086 TONS, 327' 9", 17+ KNOTS

Barb
1942



SUBMARINE, 2,424 TONS, 311' 9", 8+ KNOTS

O'Bannon
1942



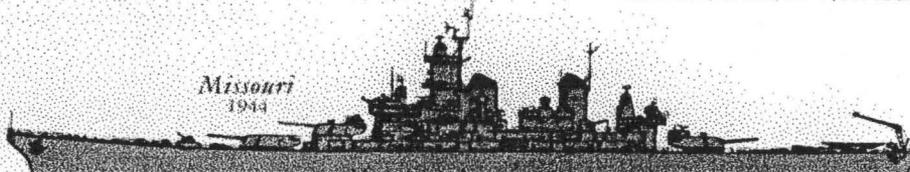
DESTROYER, 2,700 TONS, 376' 4", 35+ KNOTS

LCI 398
1943



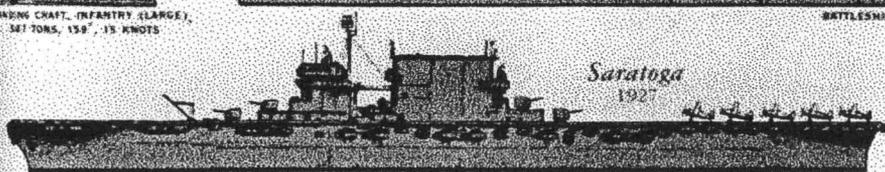
LANDING CRAFT, INFANTRY (LARGE), 387 TONS, 158', 15 KNOTS

Missouri
1944



BATTLESHIP, 57,600 TONS, 887' 3", 33 KNOTS

Saratoga
1927



AIRCRAFT CARRIER, 36,000 TONS, 886', 34 KNOTS

PT 109
1942



MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT, 45 TONS, 80', 46 KNOTS

Enterprise
1961



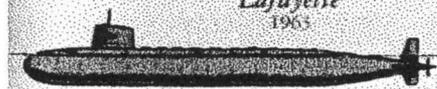
NUCLEAR-POWERED AIRCRAFT CARRIER, 89,500 TONS, 1,123', 35 KNOTS

Long Beach
1961



NUCLEAR-POWERED GUIDED MISSILE CRUISER, 17,350 TONS, 721', 33 KNOTS

Lafayette
1963



NUCLEAR-POWERED FLEET BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINE, 8,249 TONS, 425', 30 KNOTS

Richard E. Byrd
1964



GUIDED MISSILE DESTROYER, 4,500 TONS, 440', 35 KNOTS

Asherville
1966



PATROL GUNBOAT, 245 TONS, 148', 40 KNOTS

California
1973



NUCLEAR-POWERED GUIDED MISSILE FRIGATE, 10,150 TONS, 588', 30+ KNOTS

ALL DRAWN TO SAME SCALE DATE: COMMISSIONED TONS: DISPLACEMENT, FULL LOAD
LENGTH: OVERALL SPEED: MAXIMUM SUBMARINE DISPLACEMENT AND SPEED: SUBMERGED

JON BANNENBERG RDI

16.11.98

Thank you for the call. I would be delighted to assist in any way to put "United States" back into service. She is one of my dream boats.

I also am very happy to work with Don Starkov on the project.

Please keep me up to speed with any developments.

Best Regards
Jon

**Outline: Purpose and Function
of the
SS United States Foundation**

SS United States Foundation

SS United States' Purpose/Function

- Maritime Museum featuring: maritime artifacts, memorabilia, models (similar to the Peabody Museum in Salem MA).
- Oceanic Technology Museum featuring: maritime technologies, sonar, ocean mapping etc.
- Oceanic Life Museum featuring: creatures of the sea displays, small aquariums, films and exhibits.
- Futuristic Oceanic Museum featuring: exhibits, etc.
- Ship Tours featuring: the engine rooms, the bridge, etc.
- One Day Open Ocean Cruises

Fund Raising Campaigns

- Corporate Sponsorships. For a fee corporations could host exhibits and tours.
- Hall of Honor. Individual acknowledgement of a donation. Those donating over \$100 will get their names in a book on permanent display in the hall, along with their name and picture on a database accessed from kiosks throughout the ship. Those donating over \$1000 will get their names engraved in the hall of honor on brass plates—the larger the donation the bigger the plate.
- Home Port Sponsorships. Whichever port pays for it can dock the ship off-season and call themselves her "home port".
- Tax Write Off. Because she will be owned by a non-profit organization, meaning that after salaries are paid, any profit will be returned to the organization's endowment, anyone who donates will be able to write it off on their taxes.
- Ticket Sales. A reasonable charge will be administered (\$7?). Ten thousand visitors could wander about the ship without too much congestion. Thus the purpose would be to attract as many visitors as possible

Purpose/Function of the SS United States Foundation

- Phase One: fund drive to purchase the ocean liner.
- Phase Two: "before and after tours" take people on tours to see what she looks like before refitting begins. They can then have a free "private, executive tour" once the refitting is completed (this might be a great fundraiser to help purchase the ship).
- Phase Three: paint the ship with preservationist accuracy—just how she looked on her maiden voyage.
- Phase Four: electrical (install fiber optics. The fact that she is completely striped is a great asset in completely modernizing her interior).
- Phase Five: plumbing.
- Phase Six: engines ready—begin deck cruises. Allow her to become *ambassador* to herself --with limited port tours to raise money.
- Phase Seven: install interior. Her original interior was elegant but never a marvel like the Normandy or the Queen Mary, so keeping to historical accuracy is not so important here. A few spaces should be maintained but over all she has a fresh slate to work with here. This is ideal for creating a modern museum. Exhibits will be installed (i.e. artwork and alike).
- Phase Eight: full operation. Tours begin. Ports are chosen by the highest bidder (another fundraiser). Her function and purpose will be to awe the world—even more than she already has.

**The SS United States Foundation
Chronology**

**Chronology of Events
for the
SS United States Foundation**

January 1998 - February 1999

January 1998: Recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (pr@nthp.org) as one of the 30 final nominees for the 11 Most Endangered Places list.

February 1998: Recognized by the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission as eligible for listing on the National Register for Historic Places (this is tantamount to placement on the Register. The Big U was scheduled to be placed on the National Register twice this year, but in both cases the current owner has deferred this listing). In addition to being recognized by the commission a special exception had to be made in the case of the Big U because she is not 50 years old (the minimum requirement for eligibility status). Because of this foundation's efforts, the 50 year requirement was waved and she was given her first official recognition as a National Treasure.

March 1998: The SS United States Foundation was officially chartered as a nonprofit corporation in the State of Virginia. The first board meeting was held on B Deck of the SS United States and Laura Jadwin Bachko was elected President (besides Francis Gibbs, Laura's father, Nicholas Bachko, was the most closely associated person to the design and engineering accomplishments of the SS United States).

May 1998: The White House Millenium Council began considering the SS United States for inclusion in its program.

June 1998: The second board meeting of the foundation was held in Washington DC. Filmmaker George Brown III gave the board members a sneak preview of his soon to be aired documentary on the Big U. The foundation's efforts at having the Big U recognized as a National Treasures received national publicity with articles and letters appearing in *Soundings*, *Nautical World*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *the Philadelphia Daily News*, *the Newport News Daily Press* and many more publications including business and trade publications with international readerships.

A merger between the SS United States Preservation Society was first discussed.

William DiBenedetto of the preservation society joined the board of the foundation (William is responsible for having Congress introduce a bill to save the Big U back in 1992).

The Chairman of the SS United States Foundation was appointed to the Board of the preservation society.

At the insistence of Edward Cantor's office that no harm will come to the Big U, the ship was not placed on the National Trust's 11 Most Endangered List. However, this does not effect the ship's status as an endangered National Treasure.

July 1998: The final paper work was submitted by William DiBenedetto to secure the listing of the Big U on the National Register. Cynthia Gayton was appointed by the Washington Area Lawyers for the Arts as Legal Council for the foundation.

August 1998: The Chairman was informed that the Virginia Delegation is watching the efforts of the foundation to save the ship.

September 1998: Placement of the Big U on the National Register was deferred by Edward Cantor's office. The National Maritime Initiative denies funding to the foundation because of its 501c3 status. However, the foundation was invited to apply again next year.

Senator Conrad of North Dakota wrote a letter to the National Park Service to recommend the SS United States be declared a National Landmark.

Soundings, the Nation's Boating Newspaper runs a story about the efforts of the foundation to save the ship. The article entitled The Big U Forgotten but Still Floating generated more letters of commentary than any other article in the paper's history.

October 1998: Mike Alexander's web site, the most comprehensive web site on the Big U, celebrated its first year with nearly a million hits.

Mike Alexander joined the Advisory Board of the foundation serving with such distinguished maritime historians as Frank Braynard and Peter Kengo.

A letter writing campaign by school children is launched.

November 1998: Mike Alexander and the Chairman of the foundation tour the SS United States with members of the press including Jennifer Brown of the Associated Press and Iver Peterson of the *New York Times* (see AP for November 26, 1998 World's Fastest Ship on the Auction Block, Jennifer Brown). Jennifer Brown's article quotes both Mike Alexander and the chairmen of both the SS United States Foundation and The SS United States Preservation Society. In addition to this the article mentions that President Clinton was a passenger on the Big U back in 1968--this is the first international media to broadcast this information regarding Mr. Clinton's voyage.

Jennifer Brown's article begins appearing in newspapers across the country and throughout the world.

December 1998: The largest radio station in Africa, Johannesburg Radio interviews the Chairman of the foundation during their morning show--the interview is heard by millions in South Africa.

Soundings, the Nation's boating Newspaper dedicates an entire page to letters just about the Big U. Among the letters is one from the Chairman of the foundation mentioning the secrets of the Big U told to Laura Bachko by her father. Two secrets she would never find the answers to because her father passed on before having the chance to tell her. This near entire page of letters was because of *Soundings'* September issue, which had run the article entitled: Big U Forgotten but still Floating.

The White House Millennium Council was presented with a commemorative item for President Clinton.

Legal Council Cynthia Gayton, was appointed to the board of directors which includes the Honorable Bruce Lehman, Assistant Secretary of

Commerce and the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks (Bruce was among the Washington Journal's 100 Most Influential Persons list) and Laura Jadwin Bachko, the President of Nicholas Bachko Shipping. The Chicago Sun Times and three other of the nation's top 20 newspapers prints Jennifer Brown's article on the Big U in their December 28th issues. The other papers include, *The Philadelphia Daily Press*, *The Detroit Free Press* and the *Baltimore Sun*.

January 1999: WKQI in Detroit, a radio station with the sixth largest listening audience in the nation, airs an hour long interview with the Chairman of the foundation.

ACE's Biography on President Clinton includes footage of the SS United States revealing that the then-Rhodes Scholar Bill Clinton had been a passenger on the ocean liner on his way to England. This excerpt was added because of the information in the series of articles which appeared in the Associated Press. Jennifer Brown's article appears in the *Houston Chronicle* and the *Gary Indiana Post Tribune* and dozens of smaller newspapers across the nation.

Bob Bestler of the SunNews in North Carolina writes a series of articles about the foundation which generate a large amount of letters and emails.

Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, Director of The White House Millennium Council, in a letter to the chairman of the foundation, recognizes the SS United States as a national treasure.

February 1999: *The Philadelphia City Paper* (700,000 readers) runs an article by Jenn Darr entitled Float this Boat which quotes the Chairman throughout.

The Philadelphia Historical Commission unanimously approves the Big U for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

KYW News Radio airs an interview with the Chairman.

The Arnold Advertisement Agency (one of the ten largest advertisement films in the nation) launches the initial phase of the **Save the United States a Symbol of the Great Generation** campaign.

For the second year the National Trust for Historic Preservation includes the Big U in the 30 final nominees for the 11 Most Endangered Places list.

**THE RICH AND FAMOUS ABOARD
THE
SS UNITED STATES**





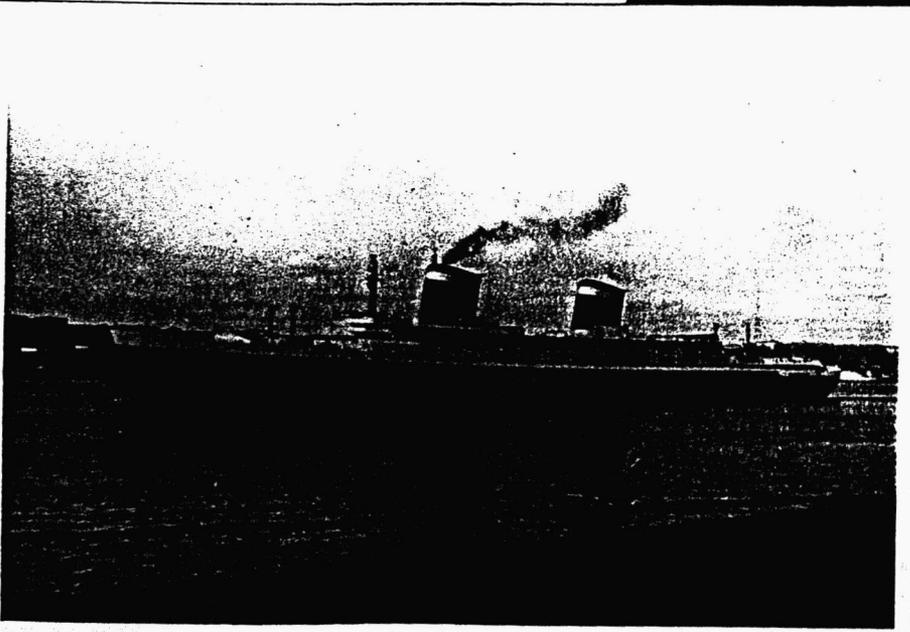


To Andrew Melrose

JAMES MASON

the

James Mason



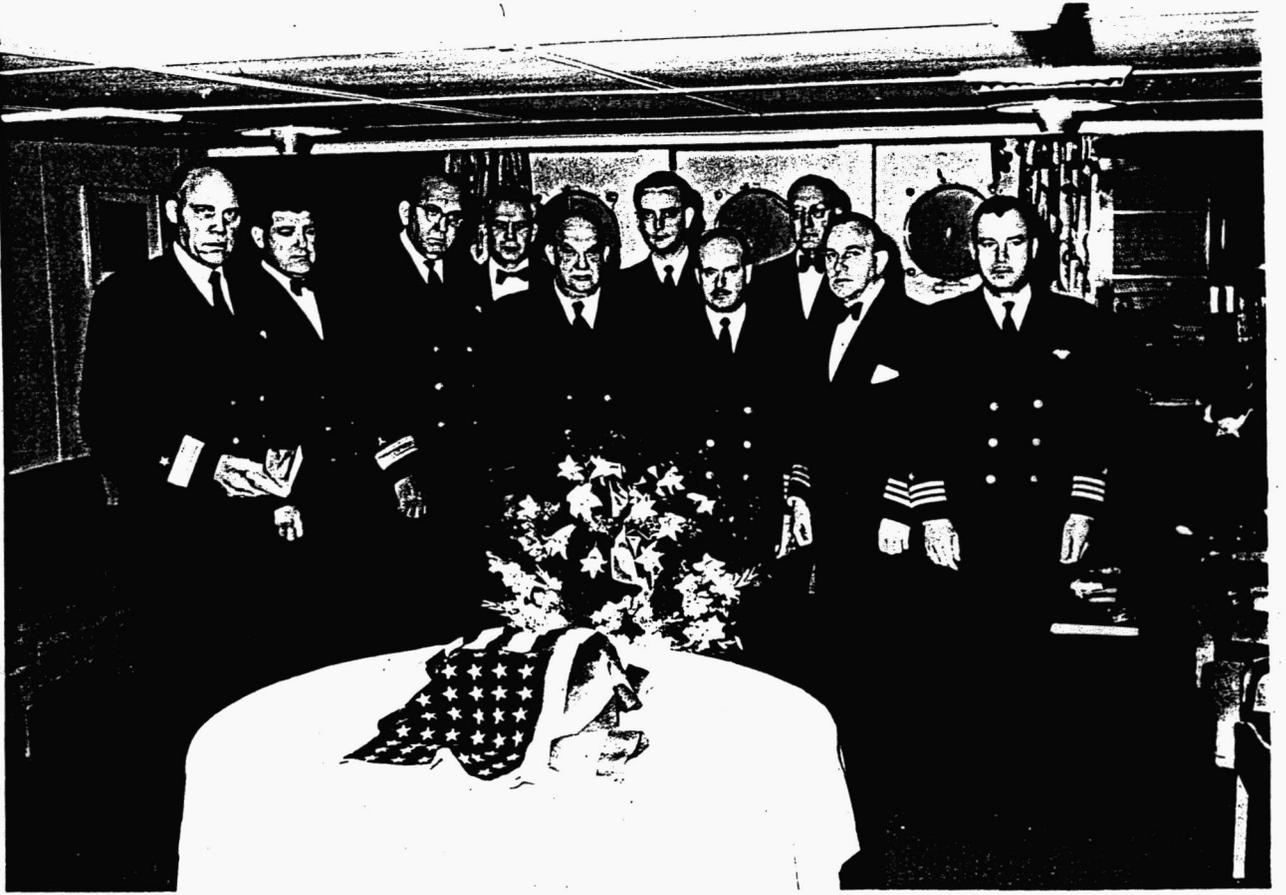


Walt
Disney

Sig. general
photo at
Washington
Tombston



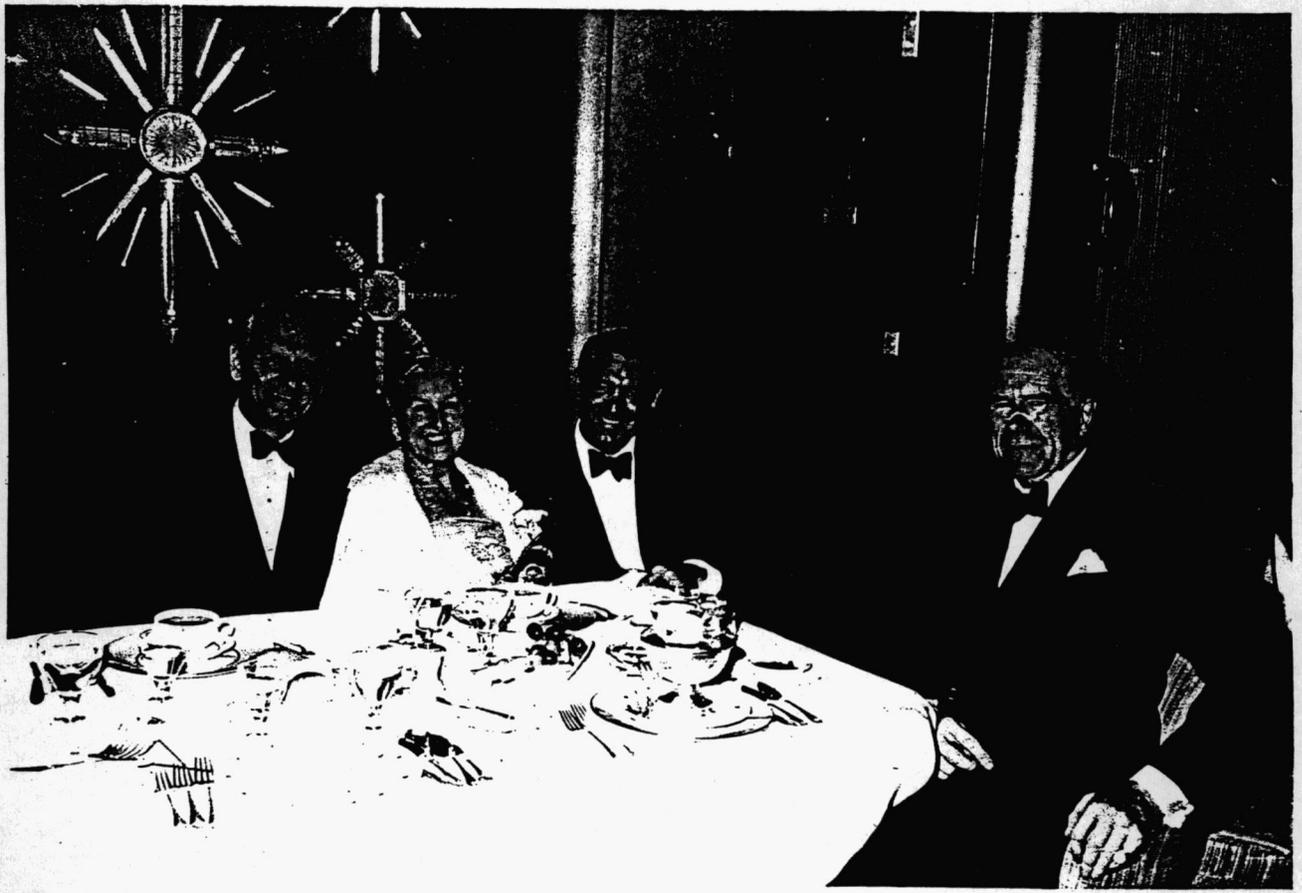




Bob Hope
Hitchcock

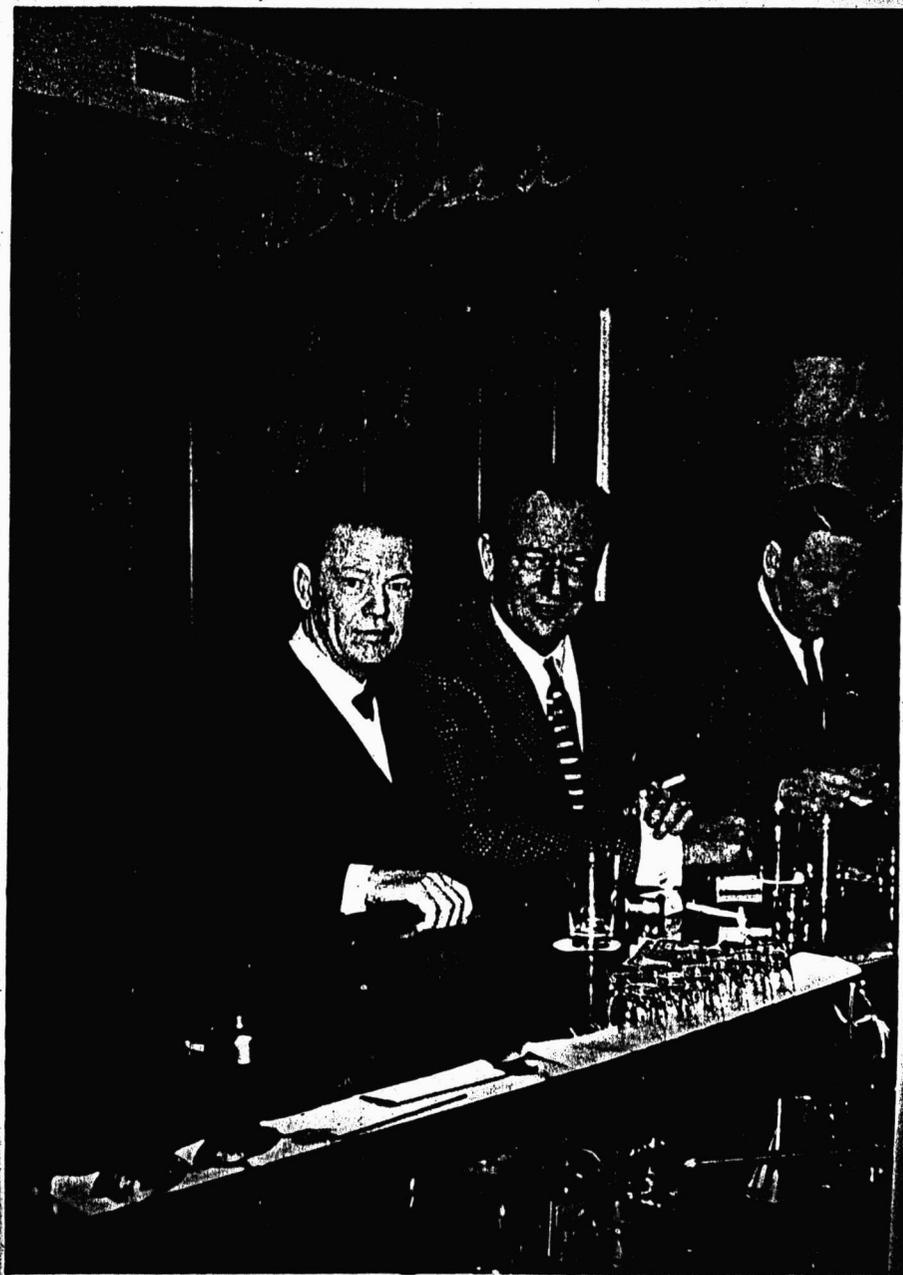


Signerat
foto av
Walt Disney

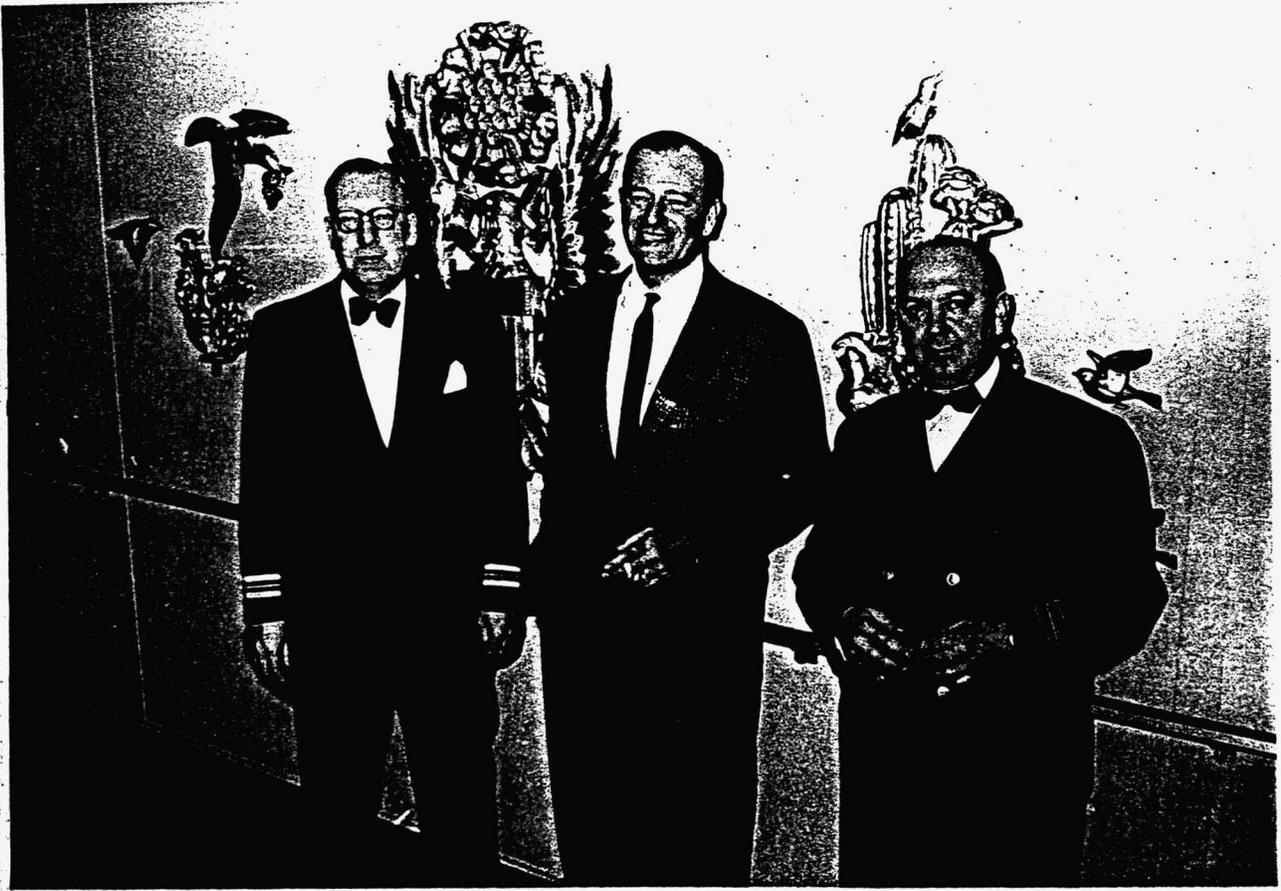


S. Anerat
foto av
Cary Grant





John
Wayne



With best wishes

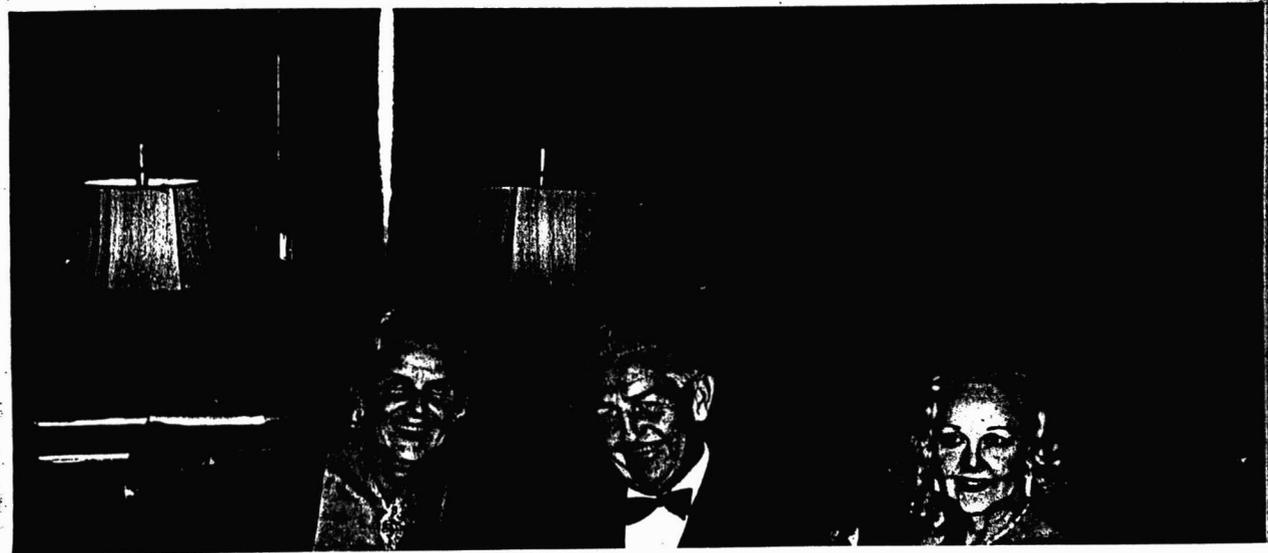
Donald Campbell



Sister
Gato.



Salvador
Dali



176 Stiles Road
Boylston, MA 01505
27 MAY 99

Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

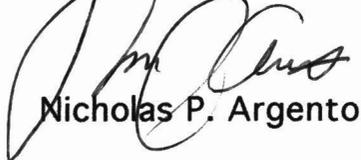
Dear Mr. Lusignan,

A number of us who are interested in preserving the *SS United States* have begun a petition to show support for putting her on the National Register. We have been surprised at the excitement and empathy for her.

Here are the first 61 signatures that we gathered over this last weekend. We have several people out getting signatures and will continue to send each list.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours Truly,



Nicholas P. Argento

Petition to list the *S.S. United States* on the National Register

TO: Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240

We, the under signed support the listing of the ocean liner,
S.S. United States, on the National Register because of its
historic national significance.

- | Name | Address |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Robert Colman | 403 Huntington Ave Bfro N.Y. |
| 2. Joe Raulan | 51 LENOX AVE AMHERST, NY 14226 |
| 3. Pat Kolupski | 255C Whitehall DR Roch NY 14616 |
| 4. John H Bishy | 2859 MACKLEM AVE NIA FALLS NY 14305 |
| 5. Timothy P. [unclear] | 2230 UNION RD WEST SENeca NY 14224 |
| 6. Chm [unclear] | 324 S. Frow Sr MION PP 17811 |
| 7. E.P. [unclear] | 2120 Seneca St W.S. NY 14224 |
| 8. James F. [unclear] | 164 Hollywood Ave, Buffalo, NY 14220 |
| 9. SIDNEY F. ARNOLD | 158 CHESTERTON DR. NEPERAN ON CANADA K2E5J1 |
| 10. Roy Medis | 10 Lincoln Rd, Peabody, Ma 01960 |
| 11. Tom KUZMA | 245 DAVISON RD Lockport NY 14094 |
| 12. [unclear] | 15 BARNSTABLE LN STAMFORD CT 06907 |
| 13. Alvin Petisturt | 1215 1/2 St Alapala Ca 22314 |
| 14. John Cheney | 73 Buffon Buffalo N.Y. |
| 15. Mansell | ORLEANS ONTARIO |

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National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, RM NC 400
Washington, DC 20240**

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historic national significance.**

Name	Address
1. Mrs. Walter Kind	3246 Postgate Dr. Bellet Park, La 70182
2. Tom Webb	220 Morristown Rd - Linden NJ 07036
3. Henry Busch	25 KERN ROAD BARRYVILLE, N.Y. 12719
4. Phelps Wright	75 Schum Ln Rochester NY 14609
5. James Major	3222 Yorkshire Rd Cleveland Hts OH 44118
6. Vito Hammiton	15 BARNSTABLE LA STAMFORD, CT 06907
7. JEB HAMILTON	15 BARNSTABLE LA STAMFORD CT 06907
8. CLIFFORD P. MILLER	3811 MARINER ST WATERFORD MI 48329
9. SUSAN K. WALTON	3811 MARINER ST. WATERFORD, MI. 48329-2274
10. JAMES R. BONANNI DMS	3440 N. HERMITAGE RD SHARPSVILLE PA 16150
11. Gregg Walsh	1218 DUNBAR FULTON NY 13069
12. John Hughes	75 Danford Rd Rochester NY 14618
13. Greg Dick	1405 St Rock Batavia NY
14. Greg	300 Wheelton Dr Kent Ohio 44240
15. Brian John	47 Glade Mallon Ballston Spa NY 12020

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historic national significance.**

- | <u>Name</u> | <u>Address</u> |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. ROY BRONSON | 20 KILMURRIDGE TORONTO, ONT. |
| 2. CHARLES M. USHER | 15 HOBSON AVE TORONTO CANADA |
| 3. Kevin Schrecengost | 10392 Liberty St. Ext Meadville, PA |
| 4. Derek Pennington | 203 Shaughnessy Blvd Ontario CA. |
| 5. Frank Bark | 216 CHAMPLAIN DR PLATTSBURGH NY |
| 6. Bruce Pinn | 4 Savoy Avenue Toronto, On, Canada |
| 7. John Ross | 108 Parkview Hill Toronto Ont Canada |
| 8. Mike Miller | 7344 Nash Rd. N. Tonawanda NY |
| 9. MARK GREGORY | 72 WALBAR RD ROCK. NY 14626 |
| 10. KIRK BALLASH | 1130 E. 346TH ST EASTLAKES, OHIO 44095 |
| 11. Ryan Shedin | 3087 Cambridge Sq. Blasdell NY 14219 |
| 12. Ken Pinn | 112 Lancaster Ave. Buffalo, NY 14222 |
| 13. MICHAEL C. ZORNICK | 33N. JESSELL DR. N.T. NY 14120 |
| 14. Joan Zornick | 33N. JESSELL DR NY NY 14120 |
| 15. Marsi Meadows | 258 Newport Pl. Wat. Ont. N2T 2B5 |

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historic national significance.**

Name Address

1. Billy Youngman 892 Co Rt 16 Beaver Dams NY
2. Tom Fuentes P.O. Box 203 Lockport NY
3. DAVE BICKER 29 PRENTICE ST. LOCKPORT, N.Y.
4. Panna Nichter 151 Peppermint Rd Lancaster N.Y 17086
5. NICK CARLUCCIO 11 EAGLEWOOD AVE BUFFALO N.Y. 14220
6. CHAS BROWN 35 S. CHERRY ST. EMPORIUM PA 15834
7. Daniel Hagner 6815 WARD Rd Wheatfield N.Y 14304
8. JUSTIN Hagner 6815 ward Rd wheatfield, N.Y. 14304. ^{please save!!}
9. Annie LaRocca P.O. 508 Homeoye NY 14471
10. Annie LaRocca P.O. 508 Homeoye NY 14471
11. SIMON RANKINE 115A AUDINO LN ROCHESTER NY 14624
12. Francine Donaldson 51 Newport St Brampton, ONT, CANADA (654N)
13. Bill Green RR 22 Cambridge Ont Canada
14. Mark S. Felt 33 Wedgewood Dr. Saco ME 04072
15. Louis Russo 368 Main St W. Saroca NY 14224

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National Register of Historic Places
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Washington, DC 20240**

We, the under signed support the listing of the ocean liner, *S.S. United States*, on the National Register because of its historic national significance.

Name	Address
1. <i>Richard Schurzy</i>	<i>18 Adam St, Silver Creek, NY</i>
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
 Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

BUREAU FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 P.O. BOX 1026
 HARRISBURG, PA 17108-1026
 (717) 783-8947

FAX TRANSMITTAL SHEET

DATE:

JUNE 2, 1999

ATTENTION:

PATRICK ANDREWS

ORGANIZATION:

NPS - NATIONAL REGISTER

FAX NUMBER:

202 343 1836

FROM:

GREG KAMLEY

TELEPHONE #:

717 783-9919

FAX NUMBER: (717) 772-0920

NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER SHEET):

8

ENCLOSED IS THE ARTICLE I

MENTIONED ON A VISIT TO THE

S.S. UNITED STATES, PHILA

ALSO I FOUND A COLOR PHOTO (ATTACHED)

OF THE FORWARD ENGINE ROOM, IT

IS NOT DATED BUT I ASSUME THE

PHOTOGRAPHER COULD TELL US WHEN

IT WAS TAKEN



P.H. PRODUCTIONS

17 February 1998

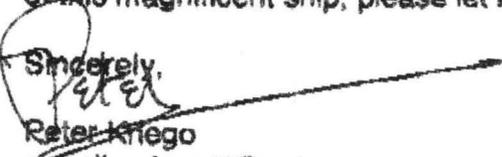
To: Carole Lee
Pennsylvania Historical Commission
717-772-0920
RE: SS UNITED STATES article
6 pages to follow

Dear Carole,

I hope this finds you well. Per the request of Robert Westover of the NEA, I am faxing an article I wrote concerning a visit I made to the SS UNITED STATES last November. It is featured in the November issue of SHIPS MONTHLY magazine out of the U.K.

Hope it is of use to you. If there is anything I can do to help further preservation efforts of this magnificent ship, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Peter Knego

e-mail: pkpro7@aol.com

15485 Mallory Court • Moorpark, CA 93021 • USA • Tel 805.529.1905 • Fax 805.529.9433

ID=7177220920

96-01-99 22:01 MUSEUM RM 539

Ships

monthly

The international magazine for
shiplovers ashore and afloat

Editor: Robert Shopland
Assistant Editor: Keith Goss
Advertisement Manager: Carol Storer
Advertisement Production: Janet Hout
Publisher: Nick Hopkinson

Regular Contributors

Laurence Dunn, Roger Fry, Rick Hogben,
John Lingwood, Mike Macdonald,
Peter Newell, Russell Plummer, Ted Scull,
Edwin Wilmshurst

'Ships Monthly'

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Front Cover — The Saga cruise ship *Saga Rose* (1965/24,474gt, ex-*Gripsholm*, ex-*Sagaforde*) photographed at Southampton in May last year. The *Saga Rose*, which was damaged by fire while undergoing refit at A&P Southampton in December, was sold by Cunard Line to the Saga Group during 1997 and is one of the ships included in 'New Cruise Ships for Old' in this issue (P.E. Kempsey)

Inside Front Cover — Short-sea traders at Rotterdam: *Canopus* (1978/5,630gt) and *Anika M* (1977/1,678gt). Recent developments in coastal shipping are reported in 'Coastal and Short-Sea Shipping' in this issue. (Ian Whitaker)

Frontispiece — A nostalgic view of the *United States* (1952/53,329gt) off Cowes, Isle of Wight bound for New York in July 1959. Since July 1996 the *United States* — former 'Queen of the US merchant marine' and trans-Atlantic record holder — has been laid up at Philadelphia, where she was recently visited by Peter Knego. His report on the ship's condition is published in this issue. (Mrs K. Wheeler)

Inside Back Cover — Focus on FotoFitte — The German-flag container ship *Contship Vision* (1997/31,000gt) photographed in the English Channel. *Contship Vision* carries seven passengers between Tilbury, Australia and New Zealand — see report in 'On the Waterfront' in this issue. (FotoFitte, Ashford, Kent)

Outside Back Cover — An overhead view of the 116,158gt, Liberian-flag liquid petroleum gas carrier *Umm Al Ashtan*, which was completed last year at the Kvaerner Masa-Yards, Turku, Finland. (Builder's photo)

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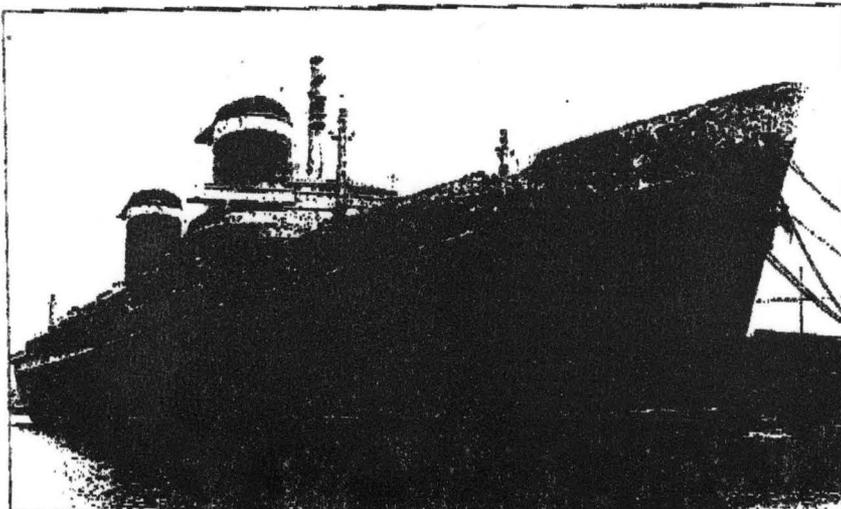
The Royal Yacht *Britannia* arriving at Portsmouth to pay off on 22nd November. (Walter Sartori)

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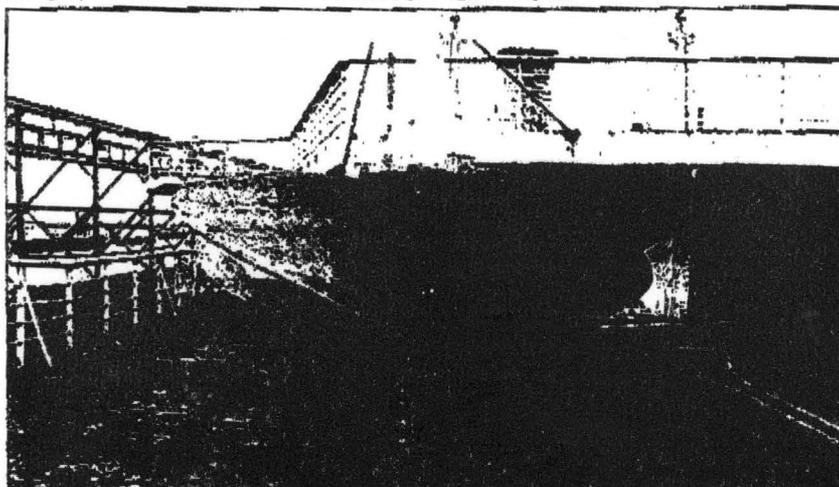


The burnt out wreck of the cruise ship *Romantica* photographed in Limassol Roads on 26th October — see pages 30-31. (P.W. Blankvaard)

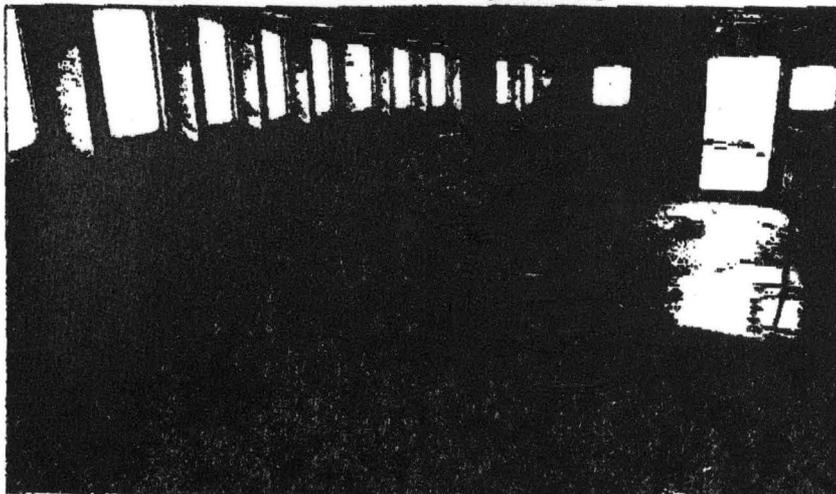
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The 'Big U' at her present lay-up berth at Philadelphia in November. Below — One of the ship's four propellers secured on the after deck. (All photographs by the author)



Below — The stripped-out wheelhouse contains no navigational equipment.



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A Visit to the 'United States'

— described by Peter Knego

On the weekend of 22nd and 23rd November I had the rare opportunity to visit and document the ss *United States*, the one time queen of the US merchant marine and trans-Atlantic record breaker. Since her arrival at Philadelphia in July 1996 from Turkey and the Ukraine (where her asbestos was removed), the old ship has been the subject of much conjecture and speculation.

The 1952-built, 53,329 gross-ton liner was famous not only for her size and speed, but for her advanced design and safety features. Her remarkable engines drove her at speeds of up to 43 knots on trials and at an average speed of 32 knots for regular service. On her maiden voyage, she captured the Blue Riband for the fastest Atlantic crossing, arriving in Southampton from New York in 3 days, 10 hours, and 40 minutes on 7th July 1952, shattering the *Queen Mary's* 1938 record by an average of 3.9 knots. Her propulsion machinery served as the prototype for US military vessels and remained classified (along with her underwater hull design) throughout her 17-year career.

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With possible wartime troop service in mind, the *United States* had a cruising range of 10,000 miles and a total of four watertight compartments (two to three being the norm at the time). Additionally, she was built with two nearly identical engine rooms. Should one be disabled by enemy attack, the second could maintain power and propulsion. Collectively, they achieved a maximum 241,785 horsepower compared with the *Queen Mary's* 158,000.

The forward engine room propelled the outboard screws. Reduction gear number one turned the starboard prop, while number four worked the port-side unit. Steam, heated to between 950 and 1,000 degrees (Fahrenheit), drove her Westinghouse geared turbines up to 187 rpm. 390 foot shafts turned two four-bladed, 18-foot props at 146 rpm to achieve a 30-knot speed.

The aft engine room powered the number two and three shafts which extended 246 feet aft to the liner's inboard screws. These five-bladed units were initially kept secret due to their advanced design.

William Francis Gibbs, her famed designer, eschewed the use of wood and flammable materials in her fittings, so the *United States'* decor emerged as the epitome of the post-war spartan 'American' shipboard look. The use of aluminium, glass, linoleum, enamels, and fireproof fabrics was a far cry from the etched glass, brass, and wood splendour of her British and European competitors, giving the ship a more modern and perhaps less opulent character.

Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, the *United States* was hugely successful, matched only by Cunard's *Queen Mary* and *Elizabeth* for fame and popularity. By the mid-1960s with air travel ushering in a different kind of trans-Atlantic era and maritime unions making the operation of US ships more expensive and difficult, her heyday had passed. She was abruptly laid up in November 1969, when a seaman's strike aborted a routine overhaul at Newport News. Her scheduled voyages, including a lengthy Pacific cruise, were cancelled and shortly thereafter, United States Lines ceased passenger operations.

During the unsentimental era after the Atlantic decline and before the cruising boom of the late 1970s, the great ship had few commercial prospects. Still considered a valuable asset in the advent of war, her sale overseas was forbidden, yet the ever-increasing operating costs of US passenger shipping made her reactivation for another American company virtually impossible. Left 'as is' with her funnels half-printed, she sat at Newport News and later Norfolk

unchanged from her final day of service, save for a network of dehumidifying pipes that were disbursed throughout the ship to keep her fittings and machinery from deteriorating.

She was finally auctioned off in 1980 to Richard Hadley, a Seattle-based real estate magnate, who formed United States Cruises. Her return to service as a floating 'time share' ship was planned and elaborate brochures were released with renderings of the liner in a white hull and funnels with red, white, and blue accents. When funding failed to arise, the ship was opened up for a few days for public tours at her Norfolk berth in October 1984, just prior to an auction that saw most of her fittings put up for sale.

I was fortunate enough to have spent two days aboard at that time, volunteering my services as a guide so that I could explore the ship when 'off duty'. Aside from some rather weathered decking and bulkheads and a layer of dust in her accommodation, her condition was remarkable. Programmes and newspapers from her last sailing were left on cabinets, while cabin keys and occasional small items such as ashtrays, plates, and silverware were left undisturbed, ready to be collected or disposed of prior to the auction that November.

Sadly, in an attempt to garner revenue from every available part of the ship, her interiors were left a shambles as fixtures were hastily and carelessly ripped from her bulkheads. Even though Hadley still claimed to be looking for finance to return the ship to service, she was now a sorry sight, awaiting what seemed a hopeless future.

In 1992 she was seized and put up for auction and saved in the eleventh hour by Marmara Marine, a group of investors headed by businessman Fred Mayer (who also happened to be the CEO of Commodore Cruise Lines) with an intent to restore the once-heralded liner for cruise service. That June, she was towed to Turkey to await removal of her asbestos so that refurbishment could ultimately be undertaken. A further tow to Sebastopol (where the work was actually completed) was followed by a dry-docking near Istanbul where her keel was cleaned and repainted and her four screws were mounted in corresponding positions on the aft Promenade and Upper Decks. Somewhere in the process, the boats and davits were removed, and the *United States* was towed back across the Atlantic, finally arriving at Philadelphia on 24th July 1996 (after attempts to secure a berth in Boston and

New York failed).

While negotiations with potential operators failed to generate the funding for her revival as a cruise liner or casino, the *United States* continued to sit. Finally, with new unpaid bills, the ship was seized and auctioned off for \$6 million on 9th November 1997. Her present owner is Linden, New Jersey-based real estate investor, Edward A. Cantor, a partner in her prior acquisition. In the meantime, the *United States* sits at berth 82 (her third berth since arriving in Philadelphia), continuing to arouse interest and attention from the city that has been her home for over a year.

Externally, the former Atlantic greyhound can be likened to a grand old movie star without make up. Her striking looks and beautiful lines are still evident despite an obvious need for touching up. Faded paint peels from her stacks, hull, and superstructure, having weathered twenty-eight years of exposure. However, the uniformity of her design remains a monument to grace and speed: huge, finned, tear-shaped funnels; long, sharply raked bows; curved and terraced superstructure; 'sheered' glass-enclosed promenades; and low, gently rounded cruiser spoon stern. A guard on the heavily-secured pier told us of the people who came to look at the ship through the roadside fence, usually with fond remembrances of sailing or working aboard her. Several have fruitlessly offered bribes and still others have hovered over the *United States* in helicopters just to have a closer view!

Going Aboard

The morning we began our visit was a rather gloomy one, with overcast skies threatening rain. With this in mind, I asked my host, Mike Alexander, if we could begin exterior shots while it was still possible. We entered the ship via the midships B Deck Foyer and proceeded with flashlights forward through a cavernous maze to the forward First Class main staircase. In the asbestos removal, all non-structural bulkheads and coverings were removed, with the exception of the enduring linoleum decking and certain table and stool bases in select mess or bar areas. The result in the dim light that shone through the portholes on either side gave an impression of what the *United States* must have looked like as she was being built. Yellow painted support bulkheads punctuated the space while wires and occasional pipes dangled from the ceiling awaiting new use. In strategic points along these bulkheads corresponding cabin numbers or

room names were spray painted in black stencilled lettering.

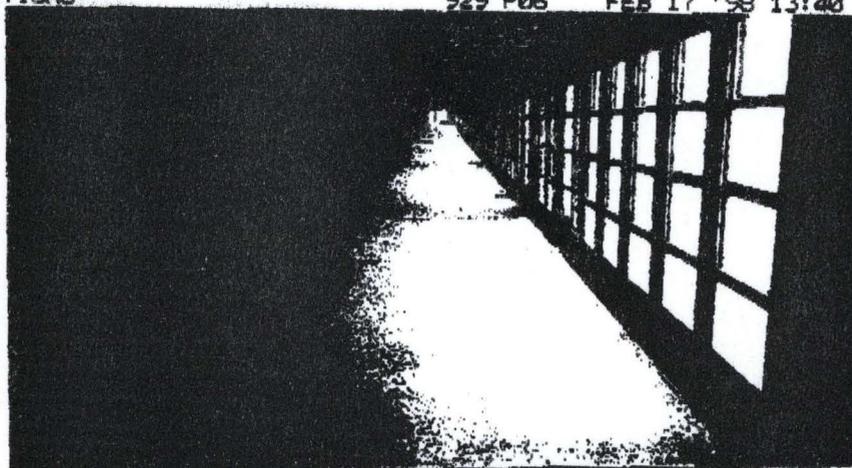
Once at the stair tower, I was delighted to see the names of the decks still engraved in original 'deco-style' lettering at the top of each flight. We climbed four levels to Promenade Deck, marvelling at how elegant the companionway still looked despite being stripped of its railings and facades. As with B Deck, the Promenade was gutted completely. We briskly walked through the forward port section through the Tourist Class spaces to the foredeck, saving a detailed inspection of her public areas for later. The ship's sheer was quite evident as we walked 'uphill' to her fo'c'sle, past stanchions and lines to the very tip of her bow. The view aft of the forward funnel in its faded red, white, and blue glory and of the aluminium radio mast and matching king posts, towering over the curved superstructure, was striking. In the distance behind, steam from chimneys across the Delaware River appeared to emanate from the still powerful-looking ship.

We worked our way up to Sun Deck and traversed its starboard length. When her distinctive aluminium lifeboats were removed, portions of the railings were left tattered and askew. Ironically, I recalled a similar view aboard the *Alferdoss* (ex-*America*) in Eleusis five years earlier, as I walked the decks of the *United States'* former consort, which had also been stripped of boats. The inboard superstructure was now exposed and the magnificent funnels seemed even larger without the boats interrupting their reign over the ship. Proceeding aft along the wet green deck, we stopped for a view over the Promenade Games Deck and saw the outboard screws mounted on either side of her aft king posts, cleaned and ready for reattachment to her shafts. After a visit to the vast Sports Deck games area, which was missing most of its railings, we went below to meet more visitors and tour the aft engine room.

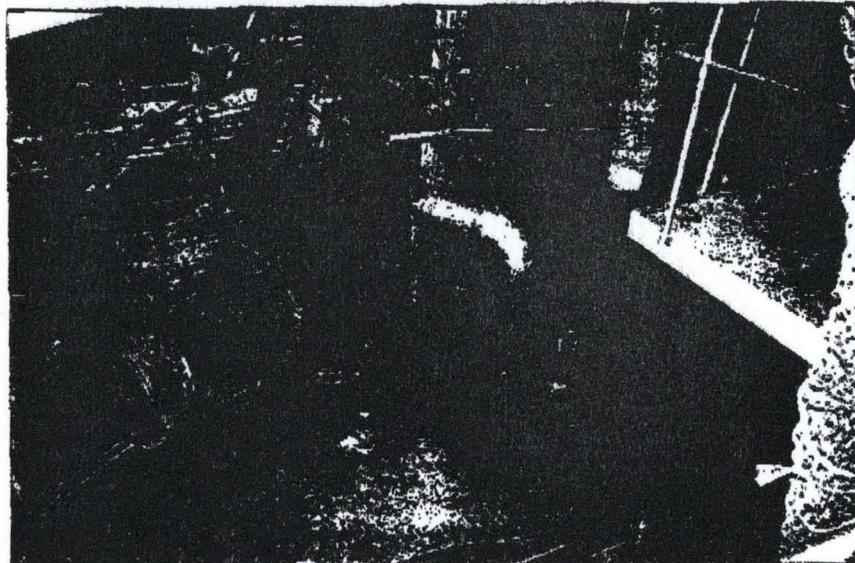
Going Below

The pitch blackness of the engine room was broken by the exploratory beams of our flashlights. An occasional camera flash would illuminate large sections of the huge space, giving dimension and texture to the darkness. Aside from an occasional missing gauge or meter, the equipment appeared undisturbed and perfectly preserved. We even managed to work our way along one of her huge shafts, wondering what it was like 45 years ago during the ship's trials when the collective four were pushed to their maximum.

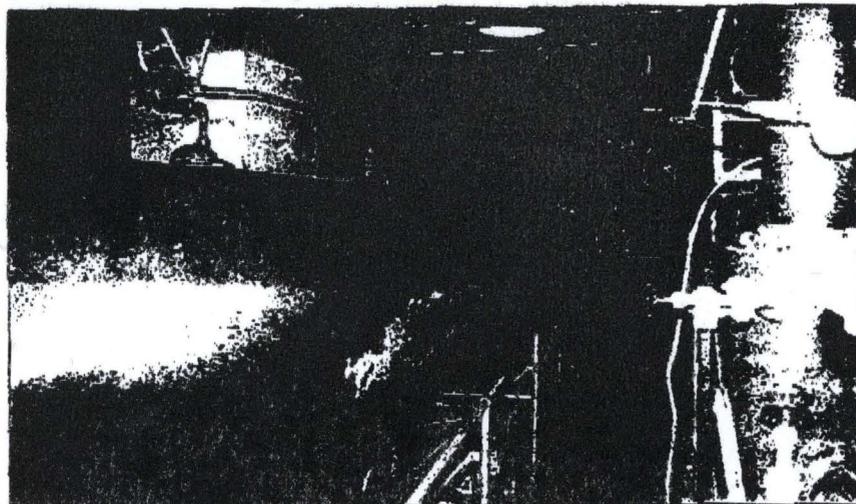
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The deserted starboard Promenade Deck. Below — Part of the ship's machinery.



Below — Down in one of the propeller shaft tunnels.



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Continuing up to the aft Main Deck, we found the former Cabin Class Smoking Room, distinguished only by the remaining service bar aft. On either side, it was surrounded by enclosed promenades which led to the aft mooring area. One level higher on Upper Deck, we found the Cabin Class Smoking Room, stripped of everything except a small band platform aft. Promenades to port and starboard led aft to the open deck atop the stern. On each side, the inboard screws were lashed to the deck, and in a similar fashion to the former *America*, the railings were smashed (presumably during the placement of the screws on the deck).

We proceeded down to A Deck working forward to the Cabin Class Foyer and through the Cabin Class Dining Room, which stretched the width of the ship. Its central section still had a metal semi-circular orchestra stand and there were wings to either side. Passing through the galley space next, we reached the First Class Dining Room. Even in its skeletal state, this room's elegant purpose was still evident. A gently arched dome over the pillar-lined central section housed a small musicians' balcony, also reminiscent of its corresponding space on the former *America*. Further forward, another empty galley space led us into the Tourist Dining Room as the ship's forward sheer once again became apparent.

From here, we worked our way six decks up a crew-only spiral staircase to Sports Deck, where the hollowed out semi-circular forward section once housed the master's and chief officer's quarters. The chart room and wheelhouse were up one more level, completely stripped of all navigational equipment, and bathed in grey light from the forward span of windows. Impressive, porthole-lined aluminium sliding doors on the port side still served their purpose, protecting the spotless space from the elements.

Savouring the sight of her 65-foot tall funnels and terraced superstructure from the vantage point of her port bridge wing, it was easy to imagine how glorious (and windy) the view must have been during one of her speedy crossings. Just above on the happily intact top deck, her aluminium radar mast looked remarkably preserved. Its uppermost extension lay on the deck nearby, cut down to allow the *United States* to pass under the Walt Whitman bridge to berth 96 in August 1996.

I spent the rest of that afternoon exploring the bridge and Sports Deck areas (all perfectly intact yet in need of superficial upkeep) and later I photographed the mag-

nificent liner from numerous angles at her berth.

That evening we returned to explore deep within her graceful hull, beginning with the indoor pool area on C Deck (still sporting its original blue paint scheme), her steering station, and crew areas in the after peak. From this underwater locale, we could hear the eerie sound of a passing ship's engines and the resulting lapping of water against the *United States*' hull from its wake. The forward areas of the ship then succumbed to our curious lights, beginning with the refrigerated cargo area (sporting a still functioning temperature gauge), various holds, the morgue, and even the brig.

Promenade Deck

On the second day, after documenting the Tourist Class Smoking Room on forward Main Deck (which still had its curvaceous bar and white polka-dotted linoleum flooring), I proceeded up to the Promenade Deck for a detailed and deliberate study. Despite being stripped to the bare yellow bulkheads, the additional height of the deck and sweeping curves of the forward-most Tourist Class Lounge nostalgically recalled the 1950s trans-Atlantic era. Just aft, the U-shaped inboard Tourist Cinema, itself flanked with a space for the Tourist Writing Room on the port side and Library starboard, was distinguished by a series of ribbed beams and a small stage aft. No longer separated from the First Class Observation Lounge, Library and Card Room, just aft, this entire portion of the Promenade Deck spanned the width of the ship and was naturally illuminated by cloudy light that emanated through the full-sized windows along its length.

The glass-enclosed promenades began just aft of this area on both sides, gently dipping with the ship's sheer and still in remarkable condition. Just inside, the Main Foyer housed a sweeping black linoleum-floored stair tower providing access to all levels of the First Class accommodation. The Ballroom Lounge was next aft, no longer giving the illusion of being circular with all of its finery removed. The orchestra platform still remained in its forward central section and marks in the decking revealed where the glass partitions and fixed seating once prevailed. The dome over the central section of the room looked much larger without its surfacing, rising a full second level over the non-existent dance floor. Again, despite its nakedness, the room was architecturally striking and yearns for new fittings.

The port side Grill Restaurant was next, devoid of all features except deco-style

white 'ruffled' doorways that apparently contained no asbestos. Just inboard, a special galley and service area lay open to the Ballroom Lounge just forward. On the starboard side, the one time Cocktail Lounge led to another foyer and the H-shaped Smoking Room, recognised only by its aft rounded central bulkhead. The novelty shop on the starboard side further aft still had the framework of one of its display cases affixed to the decking and one of the huge circular windows was missing and open to the glassed-in Promenade just outside. The last enclosed public area on this deck was the expansive First and Cabin Class Theatre, reached by small flights of stairs forward, and sweeping downwards aft to a large stage. While not as vast as many of today's super-ships' monolithic show rooms, this space could nonetheless comfortably house large revues in its two deck splendour.

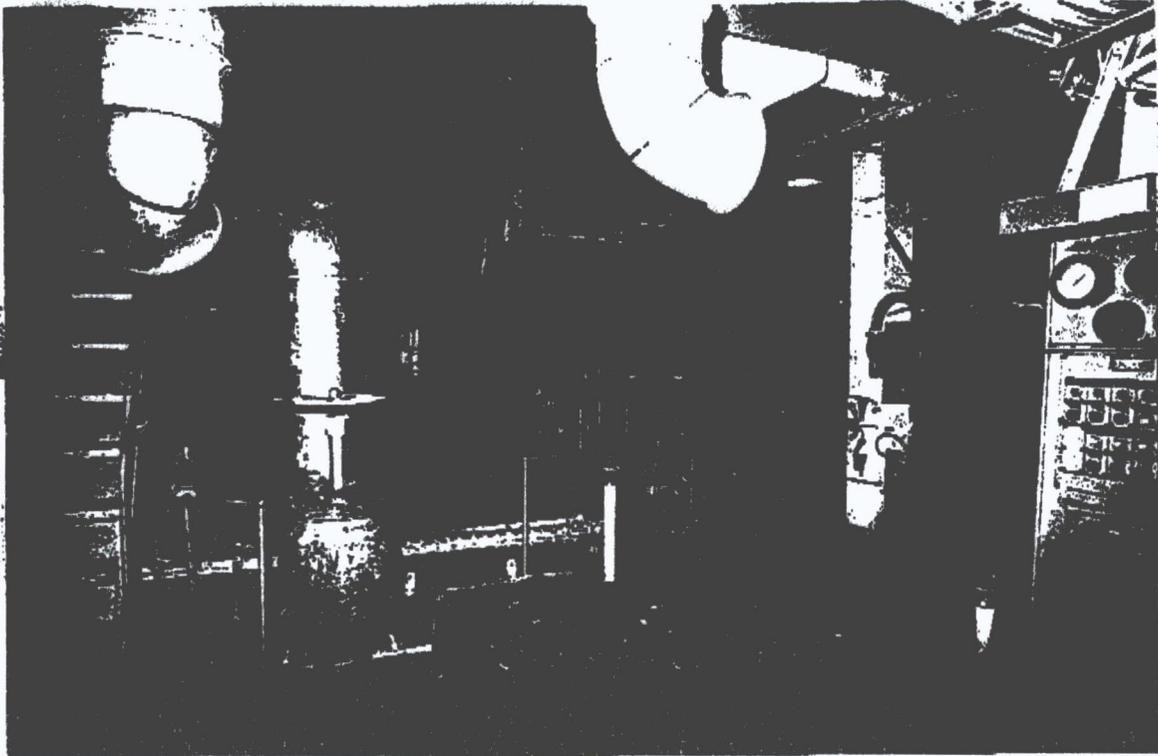
More time was spent in the forward engine room and the great ship's upper decks with friends and fellow enthusiasts who joined us for another tour that afternoon. As we returned to her bridge wings for one last survey, the sun melted through the layer of foreboding clouds, leaving us with a final, luminous view of the magnificent *United States*.

One thing the ship's weathered outer appearance belies is the remarkable 'ready to rebuild' condition she is in. Despite reports of damage and leakage, our two-day exploration revealed that she is clean and structurally intact. Perhaps if her last owners had repainted the *United States* before her return to the US, her cosmetic neglect would not have provoked such speculation. The Ukrainians did a beautiful job in removing her battered, asbestos-lined innards and left clean, sweeping spaces that are primed to house new accommodation and facilities.

Unconfirmed rumours continue to surround the ship. The fact is that she is for sale 'as is, where is' for US \$30 million. It is amazing that after nearly thirty years in retirement this wondrous ship still inspires a world-wide following. ♪

Acknowledgements: Mike Alexander, Kevin Anthony, Mr Edward Cantor, Ben Lyons, The Liners List, Steve Swanson, Alan Zamchick.

References: 'Fifty Famous Liners' Volume One by Frank O. Braynard and William H. Miller, 'SS United States. The Story of America's Greatest Ocean Liner' by William H. Miller, SS United States web site at: [www.http://ss-united-states.com/](http://ss-united-states.com/)



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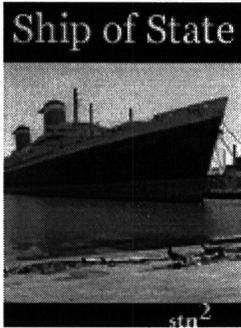
SS United States E70713
Turbine & Reduction Gear Unit #1 in Fwd Engine Room. This and Unit #4 each turn a 390' long shaft to outboard props. Units #2 and #3 are in Aft Engine Room, powering inboard props. Fwd Engine room dimensions: 88' wide x 44' long.
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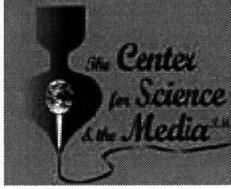
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Ship of State



What is 100 feet longer than the Titanic and faster than any passenger liner or military ship ever made to this day? Answer: the technological cold war marvel, the S.S. United States, about to be designated an historic place.

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Ship of State - Local Tips

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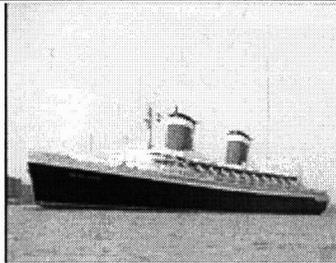
Monumental Journey?

Boat Dreams: What do you think? (Email us!!)

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Is the Fastest Ocean Liner Ever Built Permanently Docked?

To her admirers, she remains a wonder beyond any hyperbole. At 990 feet long, 101 feet wide, and capable of record-shattering speed, the S.S. United States is the fastest ocean liner ever built. Now, the once-proud United States sits neglected in the Port of Philadelphia, her interior picked clean, her carcass slowly giving way to rust and flaking paint.

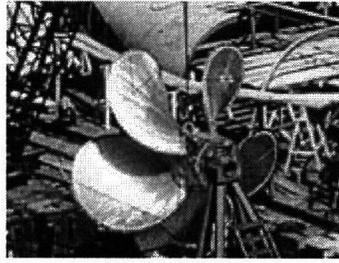


Is the ship once renowned for state-of-the-art technological innovation doomed? Not if Robert Hudson Westover has his way. Westover heads the S.S. United States Foundation, which, with a sister group, the S.S. United States Preservation Society, has convinced the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to nominate the S.S. United States to the National Register of Historic Places.

Westover's ultimate goal-- to raise the estimated \$150 to \$500 million needed to restore the world's largest passenger liner to her former glory. "Too many Americans don't even know the ship exists," Westover laments. "So now we have to recreate her legend and let people know, hey, this is an incredible wonder of the world and we need to save this ship. And when people realize that, whether they're into ships or not, they want to save it."

Built For Speed

The S.S. United States was the culmination of maritime technology. She was constructed during the cold war, under such secrecy that her top speed was a zealously guarded military secret. With a streamlined hull made of armored steel and an aircraft carrier's steam turbines driving her four massive propellers, the United States was built for speed. Designed by the era's foremost naval architect, William Francis Gibbs, she won the coveted Blue Riband on her maiden voyage in 1952, besting the Queen Mary's record by more than ten hours. Maritime historian John Maxtone-Graham says she wasn't even trying. "In three and a half days she took twelve hours off the best record. That's never going to be equalled by an ocean liner," Maxtone-Graham enthuses. As for her top speed, he agrees that it was over 40 knots (50 miles per hour!), but he adds, "Gibbs loved to be secretive. . . so we never really know how fast she could have gone."



The United States was also built for speedy conversion between civilian passenger liner and troop transport. Such a conversion would take the Queen Mary some three months, but could be accomplished "literally overnight" by the S.S. US. She was designed to withstand multiple torpedo attacks. With her numerous waterproof compartments, it's said that unlike the Titanic, the United States really could have survived a collision with an iceberg.

Some of the ship of state's innovations were to enter Americans' daily lives, as Laura Bachko, daughter of the United States' lead engineer, points out on a tour: "Here's an example of one of the technological advances that she had long before you saw anywhere else, this is safety glass, shatterproof glass that you now see on windshields of cars, this was on the ship in 1952," Bochko marvels. "Another example is radar ranges. . . we know them now as microwaves but this ship was sailing with them in 1952."



The S.S. United States never saw military service. And then the advent of commercial jetliners made her phenomenal speed irrelevant. The ship was taken out of service in 1969 and placed in mothballs. Due to the technological innovations the ship incorporated, the U.S. government forbade her sale to foreign companies or countries. Finally in the 80's the United States was sold into private ownership, and has passed from owner to owner since.

Monumental Journey?

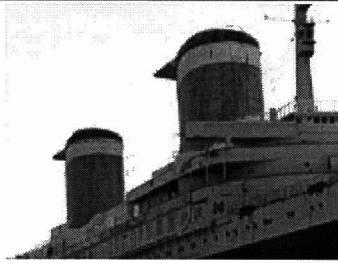
Proponents of saving the S.S. United States hope recognition by the Registry of Historic Places embarks her on a journey to monument status. Indeed, Paul Lusignan, a National Park Service historian, notes that making the National Register does not protect her from destruction or dismantling. How do historic properties get protected and preserved? Here's a summary of National Park Service (NPS) designations and their increasing levels of protection, according to Lusignan.

Designation	Owner	Degree of Protection
Historic Place	May be privately owned	Review required for Federal actions only; owner may dispose of as they wish
National Landmark	May be privately owned	NPS may provide technical assistance (not funding); owner may dispose of as they wish
National Historic Site	Property acquired by NPS	Protected by Congressional legislation; eligible for funding for acquisition, restoration
National Monument	Property and site owned by NPS	Protected by Congressional legislation and by Presidential decree; funds available for restoration and maintenance

Boat Dreams:

What do you think should become of the S.S. United States?

Historian John Maxtone-Graham wishes to see her sail again. "Nothing would please me more. . . but I can't honestly think it's going to happen," he says. "I think she is finished."



She may not sail, but might she be sold? A spokesman for her owner says he's received serious offers for the ship (asking price: \$33 million), and that one interested party wants to tie her up in New York Harbor as a luxury convention center.

Many of her devoted and growing group of fans have other dreams for the former queen of the sea. One visionary, Mike Alexander, notes that her power plant generates enough electricity to power the needs of a city of 10,000. He envisions selling electricity back to the utility companies, or perhaps constructing a golf resort on its main deck, which is longer than three football fields laid end-to-end.

Other roles suggested for the grand lady of the North Atlantic:

- Traveling museum
- National monument
- Luxury cruise ship
- Floating casino
- Humanitarian mission vessel

What do you think? Send us your one-sentence suggestion, and we'll post your top answers next week! What do you propose for the Ship of State? [E-Mail us!](#)

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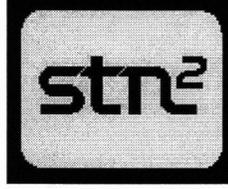
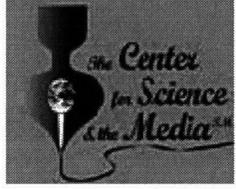
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<p>Bow of ship</p> <p>Stern of ship with damaged railing</p> <p>Aerial view of ship</p> <p>CHYRON: #Courtesy, WPVI-TV</p>	<p>(VO)</p> <p>THE S.S. UNITED STATES FOUNDATION IS MORE OPTIMISTIC. THEY HOPE TO BUY THE SHIP SOMEDAY, CLEAN HER UP AND AND TURN HER INTO A FLOATING MUSEUM.</p>
<p>I'M CURT EPSTEIN REPORTING.</p>	

<p>STORY HOME</p>	<p>SUPERS</p>	<p>LOCAL TIPS</p>	<p>CREDITS</p>
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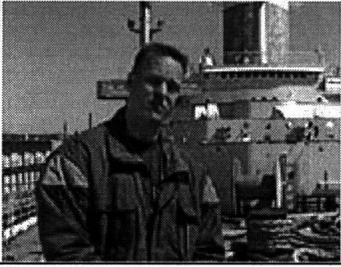
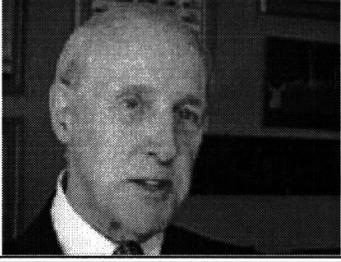
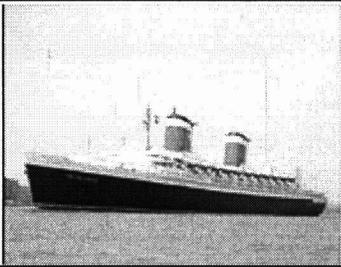
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Science and Technology News localized to fit your television market's needs.

Ship of State - Script

	(INTRO) One of the latest candidates for the list of national historic places isn't a place at all, but a ship. Curt Epstein tells us about the once proud United States and the efforts to save the largest American passenger ship ever built.
****TAKE PACKAGE****	
CHYRON: #Courtesy, Mariners' Museum #Newport News, VA Ship in heavy seas b/w footage of ship	(VO) WHEN THE S.S. UNITED STATES WAS BUILT IN 1952, TRAVEL TO EUROPE TOOK DAYS RATHER THAN HOURS. THE SHIP WAS LONGER THAN THE TITANIC AND TWICE AS FAST.
Construction footage Ship's propeller Ship at sea Working on propeller shaft	(VO) CONSTRUCTED DURING THE COLD WAR FOR POSSIBLE USE AS A TROOPSHIP, HER TOP SPEED WAS CONSIDERED A MILITARY SECRET.
Building video Video showing engines Old video showing propellers on crane Laura on promenade deck with Westover	(VO) WITH A STREAMLINED HULL MADE OF ARMORED STEEL, AND AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER'S POWERPLANT, THE UNITED STATES WAS AN ENGINEERING WONDER YEARS AHEAD OF HER TIME. LAURA BACHKO (BAH-ko) SHOULD KNOW, HER FATHER BUILT THE SHIP . . .

Soundbites:	<p>Laura Bachko</p> <p>CHYRON: #Laura Bahko #President, S.S. United States Foundation</p>	
	<p>Robert Hudson Westover</p> <p>CHYRON: #Robert Hudson Westover #Chairman, S.S. United States Foundation</p>	
	<p>John Maxtone-Graham</p> <p>CHYRON: #John Maxtone-Graham #Maritime Historian</p>	
Courtesy Footage:	<p>CHYRON: #Courtesy Mariners' Museum</p>	
	<p>CHYRON: #Courtesy Boeing</p>	
	<p>CHYRON: #Courtesy WPVI-TV</p>	