

# SIR SAMUEL AND THE NEW QUEEN VICTORIA

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Coinciding with QUEEN MARY 2's call at Halifax on 7 October, a ceremony was held to unveil a statue of Sir Samuel Cunard, the founder of Cunard Line and a native of Halifax. The larger-than-life bronze statue by artist Peter Bustin stands on the waterfront not far from the cruise ship terminal and depicts Cunard with his hand on a steamship's telegraph looking out across the harbor. Among those on the dais for the ceremony were Carol Marlow, President and Managing Director of Cunard, and maritime historian Commodore Ronald Warwick who recently retired from Cunard. In the audience of approximately 150 were a large contingent of QM2's officers and passengers including PONY members Ed Squire and Richard Wagner.

Although there had been talk of creating a Samuel Cunard memorial in Halifax for some time, the project achieved momentum in 2005 when Commodore Warwick wrote to a local newspaper following QM2's inaugural call in Halifax urging that such a memorial be created. The project was then taken-up by The Halifax Foundation in co-operation with the Halifax Port Authority. Cunard Line made the initial contribution to start the fundraising efforts. The Canadian National Railway, Secunda Marine Limited, The Bank of Nova Scotia, and The Waterfront Development Corporation were among those who also provided support. Commodore Warwick was the Honorary Chairman of the project.

The Hon. Mayann Francis, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, dedicated the monument. "Samuel Cunard was born in

Halifax, Nova Scotia November 21, 1787. Eldest son of Abraham and Margaret Cunard, United Empire Loyalists who emigrated from Philadelphia/Germantown to Nova Scotia in 1783, his marriage to Susan Duffus produced nine children, all boys, in Halifax. For more than half a century, the Samuel Cunard and Company wharves on the Halifax waterfront were the center of a vast shipping empire engaged in the West Indies trade. Samuel Cunard became the foremost entrepreneur and one of the largest owners of sailing vessels in the Maritime Provinces."



*Cunard Line President Carol Marlow, Commodore Ronald Warwick and two Royal Canadian Mounted Policemen pose with two of Samuel Cunard's descendents in front of the new statue of their ancestor. (Photo: R. H. Wagner)*

“Samuel Cunard was a visionary. He foresaw steam power replacing sail on the North Atlantic. He became the pioneer of ocean steam navigation when the paddle steamer *Britannia*, first flagship of the British North America Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, later known as the Cunard Line, arrived in Halifax from Liverpool, England July 17, 1840. The advent of steam on the North Atlantic forever altered commerce and communications between the old and the new world. Samuel Cunard, esteemed Nova Scotian and founder of the Cunard Line, was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1859. He died in London, England, April 28<sup>th</sup> 1865. It is my great honor to dedicate this memorial on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of October 2006 to Samuel Cunard.” Cunard’s great, great, great, great grandsons Benjamin and Samuel Paton then released the curtain that covered the statue.

Following the ceremony, Carol Marlow commented to this writer on the meaning of the ceremony to her company. “At Cunard our history is really where our future lies. We take our history with us. If you look at *QUEEN MARY 2* you see all sorts of memorabilia of our history. Our new ship, *QUEEN VICTORIA*, is being built very much in the footprint of the Cunard of the past. Really, our heritage is our watchword. So this sort of ceremony where we can honor our heritage and our founder is extremely significant.”

With *QUEEN VICTORIA* scheduled to enter service next year, the discussion naturally turned to the new ship. “She has almost the same dimensions as the *QUEEN ELIZABETH 2* in terms of her length [964.5 feet] and breadth [106 feet] and her height [179 feet]. She is designed as a classic ocean liner. The interior space has many grand two or three deck high areas, very much designed on the Cunard liners of the past. So, [she will be] very, very different than a cruise ship.”

Indeed, Cunard’s effort to reproduce the atmosphere of its earlier ships is manifest. Included in *QUEEN VICTORIA*’s 12 passenger decks will be a number of public rooms bearing names familiar to travelers on

QM2 and QE2 including: a Golden Lion Pub, a Queens Room ballroom; a multi-story, pillared *Britannia* restaurant; a Todd English alternative restaurant; a Chart Room bar; a Commodore Club observation bar; and a Cunard Connections computer facility. In addition, the 2,014 passengers will be able to utilize a two-story, 6,000-volume library and explore an onboard Cunard ocean liner museum. No neon, water slides or boxing rings.

Still, the new ship will be no ocean greyhound. Her maximum speed will be about 23.7 knots in contrast to QE2’s 33 knots and QM2’s 30 knots. Furthermore, she is being constructed at Italy’s Fincantieri yard where the Vista-class cruise ships of Holland America, P&O, and other lines were built. In fact, isn’t *QUEEN VICTORIA* based on the same design as the Vista-class ships? “Originally, yes. But now *QUEEN VICTORIA* has been lengthened, her bow strengthened, and her superstructure has been strengthened. Those [exterior] lifts that go up and down are gone. The layout and of the interior is just totally different. We describe the *QUEEN VICTORIA* as the ‘next classic Cunarder’ because that is what she is going to look like.”

As Ms. Marlow indicated, *QUEEN VICTORIA* will not be just a Vista painted black and white with a red funnel on top. Indeed, a Vista was originally ordered from Fincantieri to be the third ship in the Cunard fleet but that ship was given over to sister-company P&O (as the *ARCADIA*) because *inter alia* Cunard wanted to make certain modifications to the design. As a result, *QUEEN VICTORIA* will be approximately 8,000 tons larger and 30 feet longer than *NOORDAM*, the most recent of the HAL Vistas. The hull design was analyzed to ensure it can withstand the rigors of the North Atlantic. Based upon these calculations, critical areas, decking, and bulkheads were strengthened to meet the predicted stress levels. Similarly, steel was added to the bow structure to meet the dynamics and pounding that the fore end of a ship can expect to experience in extreme seas.

Like QM2, QUEEN VICTORIA will be driven by pods. However, unlike QM2, there will be no fixed pods, just two rotating Azipods. Providing power to the pods and the three bow thrusters will be six diesel engines capable of generating 63.4 MW. In contrast, QM2's four diesel engines and two gas turbine engines can generate 118 MW. This means that while she will not have the speed of QM2, QUEEN VICTORIA should have the same excellent maneuverability.

Another way Cunard is seeking to ensure that its heritage is carried forward is by the appointing Captain Paul Wright to bring out the new ship. Wright has been with Cunard for 26 years and has commanded QM2, QE2, as well as CUNARD COUNTESS, CUNARD PRINCESS, and CUNARD DYNASTY. He will be one of just a handful of captains to have commanded three Cunard Queens and, of course, the first to command all three of the more recent Queens. Past travelers on Cunard will remember that his affable charm made him popular with his crews and with passengers. Marlow indicated that she was "delighted" by the reaction to the 4 October announcement of Wright's appointment.

Work on QUEEN VICTORIA began in April 2005 and her keel laying took place thirteen months later. She will be floated out in January 2007 and is scheduled to enter service in December 2007 with two inaugural cruises - - one to northern Europe and the other to the Canary Islands. After that, she will make a tandem transatlantic crossing with QE2, which will end with a meeting with QM2 in New York on 13 January 2008. How will she be used after that? "She is off on a world cruise to start with and we are just finalizing her 2008 deployment at the moment. She is one of the Cunard fleet so she can do any of the itineraries, really. We haven't quite decided."



*Carol Marlow, President of Cunard. (Photo: R.H. Wagner).*