

## Travel



10C(B.5X7, Ro-12B, F-11B, 4B, P, C-7C)

O&amp;E Thursday, February 13, 1988

## Queen, Goose: 2 biggest stars in Long Beach

By Doris Scharfberg  
special writer

**T**HE R.M.S. QUEEN MARY, once empress of the high seas, has reached 50 and her birthday party is going full steam ahead in Long Beach, Calif.

Permanently berthed next to another celebrity, Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose, the ship-turned-hotel has scheduled a long list of anniversary high jinks through May 26.

"They include a '50 years of Fashion' show, egg hunts, big bands, commemorative coins, and a search for the 'missing crown jewels' (Winner keeps a diamond). There will be more champagne than was seen at her launching.

Ocean liners are expected to be of ample size, but the 1,000-foot-long Queen Mary is awesome, a 12-story ship looming at dockside like a walled city.

SHE WAS built to be the biggest, fastest, most glorious ship ever to leave Southampton, and, incidentally, to carry England's messages abroad; "R.M.S." stands for Royal Mail Ship.

Two thousand passengers could be carried in three classes of accommodations, none of which were sparse.

A First Class ticket at \$564 round-trip (1936 prices) gave you a chance to dine near Gloria Swanson or the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and rented one of the largest cabins ever seen on a cruise ship. These original staterooms still gleam with wood paneling, Art Deco trim, streamlining, formica and plastic. . . . costly materials in the thirties.

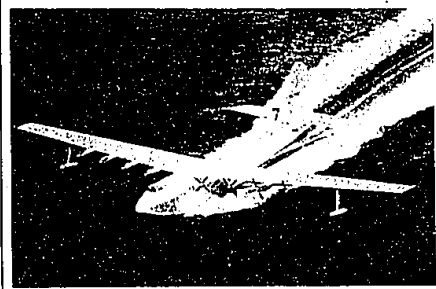
DURING WORLD War II, the Queen went to war, putting her 27 massive boilers to work transporting 800,000 men past enemy subs and winning citations for bravery.

In postwar economic battles, however, the high-priced Queen could not compete with inexpensive jet service to Europe. Long Beach paid \$5 million in 1957 to buy the vessel as a tourist attraction. After 1,001 Atlantic crossings and a farewell voyage around Cape Horn, she became a Californian. More than a million spectators welcomed "their ship" to her last port.

After reconstructive surgery and cosmetic paint, the Queen Mary is like a museum outfitted with every luxury hotel facility. You can dine in high



Long Beach's two biggest visitor attractions are the "fretted" Queen Mary ocean liner and Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose. The Queen, an awesome 1,000 feet long and 12 stories high, is now a hotel. The Spruce Goose the largest airplane ever built flew only once, less than a mile.



style, hold a convention, or sail into matrimony in the gem-like Gothic Chapel.

NO ONE gets seasick on Q.M. honeymoons any more, but you can feel the sea moving when harbor waters are rough.

Stretched out in your own suite, you can wonder about the famous people who occupied it in earlier days. There is a "living time capsule" feeling on board; an echo from the past that doesn't interfere with the present.

Groups touring the ship are piloted around most of the hotel areas to preserve guest privacy and at-sea illusions. On the bridge, for example, a sound light show simulates an ocean

storm crisis, even to rain pouring against windows.

A night on board runs from \$59 to \$89, single occupancy; \$75-\$105 double. Lower prices are for inside rooms.

THE SPRUCE Goose, another think-big creation, is berthed a few steps away from the Queen. It was also built to carry quantity payloads across the Atlantic in record time.

Hughes' XF-11, called the Flying Boat or the "Spruce Goose," was designed to lift men and arms to Europe above the reach of German U-boats in World War II.

The Goose, the world's largest airplane, nests under the world's largest geodesic dome, a bubble worthy of its own postcard. Inside the roof is painted black; the Flying Boat under spotlight is white. It stands. Nobody expects much airplane. Eight engines, wings spreading as wide from wing-tip to wing-tip

as two Boeing 707s. Visitors clamber up a steel staircase, walk through the cargo hold and peer into the cockpit where a wax Hughes is looking over his shoulder. "Here's Howard" exhibits, aviation displays, and a 400-seat theater showing related films are there to answer questions.

HUGHES'S PERSONA, so dominates that it is nearly forgotten how Howard had to be argued into this project by Henry Kaiser, inventor of the Liberty Ships. Once Hughes saw the merit of Kaiser's idea, however, the aviation ace, millionaire movie-maker, etc., put everything he could into making it work. The prototype was begun in 1942.

Metal shortages forced the use of laminated wood, but only slivers of spruce are found anywhere. The Spruce Goose is really a birch bird. Another high-tech note: ordinary beach balls were used to add buoyancy when it landed.

Of course there were nay-sayers to battle. In a scenario suitable for one of his own movies, Hughes faced congressional inquiries and was accused of fraud and boondoggling, but in the last reel he dazzled 'em all.

It took five years to finish the plane but in November 1947, he taxied across Long Beach Harbor and flew. It flew under a minute, under a mile, but it flew.

TOO LATE. The war was over by then and no one needed even one such plane, let alone the 5,000 optimistically planned.

When Hughes died his Goose became an endangered specimen, threatened by museums and collectors who sought to buy parts. When the Goose was on the auction table and ready to be carved up, it was the Aero Club of Southern California and Wharfedale Corp. who came to a last-minute rescue. Hughes would have relished the drama.

Served directly by Republic and other lines, Long Beach draws from Los Angeles International, is an easy drive to Disneyland, Hollywood, San Diego or Palm Springs.

And don't forget the long, long sandy beach for which Long Beach was named. For a visitors guide and more information: Long Beach Visitors Council, 180 E. Ocean Blvd., No. 150, Long Beach, CA 90802. Phone 213-436-3645.

After reconstructive surgery and cosmetic paint, the Queen Mary is like a museum outfitted with every luxury hotel facility. You can dine in high style, hold a convention, or be married in a Gothic Chapel.

as two Boeing 707s.

Visitors clamber up a steel staircase, walk through the cargo hold and peer into the cockpit where a wax Hughes is looking over his shoulder. "Here's Howard" exhibits, aviation displays, and a 400-seat theater showing related films are there to answer questions.

HUGHES'S PERSONA, so dominates that it is nearly forgotten how Howard had to be argued into this project by Henry Kaiser, inventor of the Liberty Ships. Once Hughes saw the merit of Kaiser's idea, however, the aviation ace, millionaire movie-maker, etc., put everything he could into making it work. The prototype was begun in 1942.

Metal shortages forced the use of laminated wood, but only slivers of spruce are found anywhere. The Spruce Goose is really a birch bird. Another high-tech note: ordinary beach balls were used to add buoyancy when it landed.

Of course there were nay-sayers to battle. In a scenario suitable for one of his own movies, Hughes faced congressional inquiries and was accused of fraud and boondoggling, but in the last reel he dazzled 'em all.

It took five years to finish the plane but in November 1947, he taxied across Long Beach Harbor and flew. It flew under a minute, under a mile, but it flew.

TOO LATE. The war was over by then and no one needed even one such plane, let alone the 5,000 optimistically planned.

When Hughes died his Goose became an endangered specimen, threatened by museums and collectors who sought to buy parts. When the Goose was on the auction table and ready to be carved up, it was the Aero Club of Southern California and Wharfedale Corp. who came to a last-minute rescue. Hughes would have relished the drama.

The Spruce Goose, the Queen Mary and an English-accented shopping complex called Londontowne Village are found at the southern end of the Long Beach Freeway. They are open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. but the box office closes at 4 p.m. to allow two hours for the last tour. For information, call 213-435-3511.

FIFTY YEARS ago Long Beach was a sunny town for tense Hollywoodians like Clark Gable and Carol Lombard. Stylish homes and cottages, some peach hotels. The City of Long Beach now has major industries like oil, aviation as well as abundant convention facilities. Aging Art Deco and Spanish Revival structures have been fixed up to reflect proudly in glassy high-rise offices. Downtown shopping is good.

The 1926 Breakers Hotel, for example, is old elegance in new shape, just a short hike from "Queen." \$50 and up for a double room. In the same area, Shoreline Park offers biking, hiking and fishing.

Go on a whale watch, sail to Catalina, or take a "Gondola Getaway" canal tour around Naples Island. It is a true Venetian ride with cheese, crackers and Pavarotti singing on tape. You bring the wine. \$40 per hour.

Rancho Los Alamitos (Ranch of the Little Cottonwoods), L.A.'s oldest structure, invites tours. Intriguing Spanish-Victorian home, once the center of a huge ranch. Wed.-Sun. afternoons. . . .

Served directly by Republic and other lines, Long Beach draws from Los Angeles International, is an easy drive to Disneyland, Hollywood, San Diego or Palm Springs.

And don't forget the long, long sandy beach for which Long Beach was named. For a visitors guide and more information: Long Beach Visitors Council, 180 E. Ocean Blvd., No. 150, Long Beach, CA 90802. Phone 213-436-3645.

## For a mini-vacation, try a hotel

Special weekend price packages at area hotels, coupled with events and activities that range from the sedentary to the strenuous, make Southeast Michigan a great place for winter weekend getaways, according to the Michigan Travel Bureau.

The Hotel St. Regis in Detroit's New Center offers "The Holiday" — With a European Accent, a package including weekend accommodations and theater tickets.

Rates for the elegantly restored rooms range from \$175 for one night per couple, to \$199 for two nights per couple, and include chilled champagne upon arrival as well as a \$35 credit toward a weekend dinner in the Restaurant St. Regis.

Reservations for the St. Regis "Holiday" also include tickets for a performance at the Michigan Opera Theatre, the Althe Theatre or the Fisher Theatre, all in the New Center's "Theatre Row," or an Orchestra Hall concert.

WEEKEND selection is based upon ticket availability.

Another all-around-downtown Detroit excursion takes advantage of special weekend

and rates at the Hotel Pontchartrain, the Westin Hotel or the new Omni International. Rooms range from \$59 to \$135 per night, based on double occupancy.

The Detroit Institute of Arts offers films, Sunday Brunch with Bach, youth theater performances or just the opportunity to quietly contemplate its 65,000-work collection.

The Detroit Science Center will fascinate kids of every age with its hands-on approach to the sciences.

For an evening with an ethnic twist, Greektown and Trapper's Alley, a five-level "festival" mall with 90 shops and restaurants, provide the stage for a colorful event.

THE GREAT Escape Weekends at Dearborn's Henry Ford Museum take winter

visitors back into another era to enjoy recreations of its entertainment, fashions, food and famous personalities.

Visitors at the 1920's Great Escape, Feb. 22-23, will listen to early jazz, dance the Charleston, ogle "daring" flapper fashions, and mingle with Charles Lindbergh, Gloria Swanson and Charlie Chaplin. Weekends in January, March and April will bring back the 1900s, 1940s and 1950s.

Greenfield Village also offers winter walking tours from January through mid-March. For information about tours and the Great Escape Weekends, call (313)-271-1976.

THE HISTORIC Dearborn Inn offers a two-night package including lodging and cocktails upon arrival for two people, and admittance to both the museum and village for \$180. Call (313) 271-2700 for details.

The Mayfair Regent  
Presents a Romantic  
VALENTINE'S WEEKEND

Chilled champagne and fresh strawberries will greet you in your lavish room or suite. A continental breakfast in bed and a newspaper will pamper you in the morning.

A special optional romantic candlelight dinner can be served in your room with advance reservations.

Valentine Weekends are available starting at \$125 per couple. Please call for details.

All reservations include a donation to our special Valentine, The Young Professionals for the Chicago Heart Association.

*The Mayfair Regent*  
CHICAGO

A Regent International Hotel  
181 East Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611 312/787-8500 or 800/545-4000  
The Leading Hotels of the World

**SAVE ON ALL CORPORATE TRAVEL**

AIRLINE TICKETS  
ACCOMMODATIONS  
CAR RENTAL  
HOTLINE  
CHARTER SERVICE  
FREQUENT FLYER  
LOWEST CORPORATE RATES AVAILABLE  
HIGHEST QUALITY SERVICE  
INSURANCE  
your executive travel plan of the future.  
FARMINGTON  
855-2620  
— INSTANT TICKETING —

Florida - Recommended Harbor Island Spa Package

**Harbor Island Spa's**  
Hot Line  
**1-800-SPA-SLIM**

Come out of the "Cold" and melt off POUNDS at America's #1 Spa

Call now & receive the latest information on our reasonable rates.

Room rate includes: 3 Supervised meals daily - Dietician - Spas for men & women - Free massages - Indoor & water exercise classes - Free tennis - Golf (avail) - Nightly dinner dancing & Entertainment - Every resort facility.

Call now for rates & brochure  
CALL TOLL FREE - dial  
**1-800-SPA-SLIM**  
(1-800-772-7546)

# BETTER RATE THAN EVER.

## Super Savings on selected Winter Caribbean group cruise departures.

So you weren't planning on a winter vacation. Or maybe there was no more "budge" in your budget.

Or could be you're just plain lute. We understand.

And, to show you just how much, we've set terrific deals on Caribbean cruises that are sure to turn "no plans" into Big Plans for you.

From Fort Lauderdale, Florida, you'll sail away from all on home lines new

Atlantic, a lavish floating resort.

Superb Italian service, five scrumptious meals a day, top notch entertainment, duty free shopping, exciting casino, spacious decks—and more.

Choose from our 10-day cruise, departing March 26, or the 15-day cruise departing February 23. You'll visit exciting islands like

St. Thomas, Barbados, Antigua, Martinique, and Curacao. And you'll come back looking and feeling like a million bucks. Atlantic, Libran registry.

But don't wait too long. Hurry in for more details and

**HOME LINES CELEBRATED MV ATLANTIC**

**SAVE**  
\$950 to \$1475  
per cabin!

**Brian Lewis Travel Shoppe**

Call Today For Your Reservation:

**278-9805**

**SANDERS TRAVEL - CONSULTANTS**  
THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS

FREE FLIGHT INSURANCE \$200,000

**SAN DIEGO** .....from \$198<sup>00</sup>  
**LOS ANGELES** .....from \$198<sup>00</sup>  
**PHOENIX** .....from \$198<sup>00</sup>  
**LAS VEGAS** .....from \$198<sup>00</sup>  
**TAMPA** .....from \$178<sup>00</sup>  
**ORLANDO** .....from \$179<sup>00</sup>  
**FT. LAUDERDALE** .....from \$178<sup>00</sup>  
**MONTEGO BAY** .....from \$529<sup>00</sup>  
**TORONTO** .....from \$69<sup>00</sup>  
**OCHO RIOS** .....from \$469<sup>00</sup>  
**CANCUN** .....from \$399<sup>00</sup>  
**BAHAMAS** .....from \$419<sup>00</sup>  
**ST. MAARTEN** .....from \$779<sup>00</sup>  
**HAWAII** .....from \$629<sup>00</sup>

**ASABRE / Budget**  
**FARMINGTON HILLS**  
855-2620  
— INSTANT TICKETING —