

M.V. "Anunciada" at Gravesend

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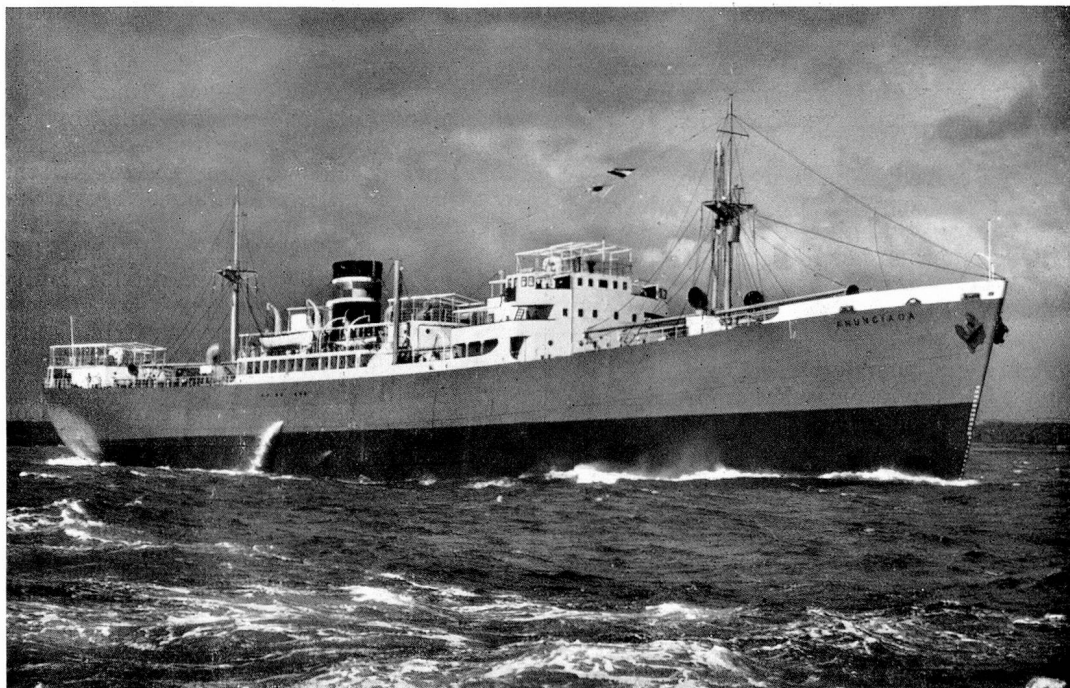
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M.V. "Anunciada" at Gravesend



M.V. "ANUNCIADA" (Cargo: 9,500 t.)

To see the Swiss flag flying at the stern of a ship always gives me a big thrill.

Twice I have had the opportunity to attend the launching of vessels destined for the Swiss Merchant fleet, which during the last few years has attained considerable dimensions.

It was in June 1947, when I was privileged to witness the launching by Madame Henri Guisan, in the presence of the General, of the M.V. "General Guisan", belonging to the "Suisse Atlantique, S.A." of Lausanne, and built at the yard of Messrs. Wm. Gray & Co. Ltd., at West Hartlepool on the Scottish border.

In November, 1948, I travelled once more to West Hartlepool, this time to be present at the launching of the M.V. "Carona", by Madame H. de Torrenté, the wife of our Swiss Minister in London, and owned by the "Schweiz. Reederei, A.G." of Basle.

Only those who have ever attended the baptism of a ship can realise with what enthusiasm the vessel's first journey down the shipway is greeted.

In August, 1949, I had the pleasure of visiting the M.V. "General Guisan" on her first arrival at the King George V Docks in London, which was an experience I would not have missed for anything, and now, on Friday, July 3rd, by courtesy of the owners, the "Transports Maritimes Suisse-Outremer, S.A." of Geneva, I was invited to pay a visit to the M.V. "Anunciada" which arrived at Gravesend with a cargo of grain from Canada.

This handsome ship was built in 1948 by Messrs. William Doxford & Sons, Ltd. in Sunderland, and is

registered in Basle. The length over all is 442' 11" — 135m, breadth extreme: 56' 6" — 12.22m, gross register: 5369.51 tons with bunker capacity of 918 tons, (winter ballast capacity: 2,672 tons — incl. DT).

She is principally used for carrying grain at a capacity (grand total) of 572,690 cft. There is passenger accommodation for 6 in 3 double state-rooms, crew accommodation consists of 24 rooms and 36 berths.

It might interest my readers to hear, that out of a crew of 34 carried by the "ANUNCIADA" no less than 23 are of Swiss nationality, amongst them one officer (Engineer), which goes to prove that our country is well on the way to join the seafaring nations of the world, and we may yet see one day, that a Swiss ship, sailing the high seas will be under the command of a Swiss.

* * *

A tug took us to the vessel which was anchored in mid-river off Gravesend, and on ascending the companion way, we were greeted by Captain Müller, who was accompanied by his Officers.

There were present Mr. C. V. Druitt, and Mr. R. Hangartner, Directors of the Alpina Shipping Agency Ltd., M. Jean Fornet, Fondé de Pouvoir of the Transports Maritime Suisse-Outremer, S.A., Geneva, Mr. A. Stauffer, Editor of the "Swiss Observer", and Messrs. Egger and Baumgartner of the Swiss Legation, London.

Cocktails were served in the "petit salon", which is at the disposal of the passengers, during which the members of the party were introduced to the Captain

and his Officers, this was followed by an excellent luncheon, the *Menu* of which consisted of soup, sole, "real" fillet steak with various vegetables and a delicious soufflé. White and red wines of a fine vintage were also served. Speaking from experience of either dinners or luncheons served on board-ship, I can testify to the excellence of the food both as to quality and quantity which should be one of the incentives to join the "Swiss Navy" or any other navy. The Chef, who is one of our countrymen, had certainly excelled himself, and greatly added to the enjoyment of this visit.

Whilst coffee was served, Monsieur J. Fornet, on behalf of the owner's company, extended hearty greetings to the visitors, thanking the Captain and his Officers for their generous hospitality.

Before leaving this really fine vessel the guests were taken round on a little inspection tour. The engine room, the Captain's, passengers and crews quarters, the bridge, chart room and deck were visited and all looked spick and span, but what impressed me most was the spirit of good comradeship which was evident amongst the officers and crew.

To see this handsome vessel, carrying proudly the Swiss flag, amongst the many ships of all nationalities surrounding her, was indeed an inspiring experience which will remain a treasured memory to all those who were privileged to be present.

And now "Good Luck" and "Happy sailing" to the M.V. "ANUNCIADA".

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This new type automatic Private branch telephone Exchange is apparently the first to be installed by the G.P.O. in the West End Central Area as a show piece and/or forecast of "Things to Come".

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Our next issue will be published on Friday, July 31st, 1953. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscription: Mrs. E. Wahl, G. Bruschweiler, C. Filliez, J. Favre-Bulle, J. Sohm, J. Stettler, Ch. Chapuis, H. Ott, C. de Mierre, J. Froehlicher, Miss M. Paly.



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