



Departure for official trials: 23-04-1938

Nz 21B s.s. Nieuw-Amsterdam (II) 1937, Holland America Line, (HAL) Situation 1938

Builders: Rotterdamsche Droogdok Maatschappij, Rotterdam, Netherlands.  
Yard number 200  
Tonnages: 36 287g.r.t., 21 496 net.  
Dimensions: 231,20m x 213,36m (x 27,34m, promenade deck) x 16,76m  
Propulsion: Two Parsons quadruple steam turbines, built by N.V.Koninklijke  
Maatschappij "de Schelde", Flushing, Netherlands. 34 000Apk, twin  
screws, cruise speed 21 k.  
Passengers: 568 first class, 455 tourist class, 209 third class.  
Crew: 650

After more than two years negotiations, the keel of the "Nieuw-Amsterdam" was finally laid down on January 3, 1936.

In 1934, HAL had calculated that the financial results over the past years would have been far better, if the Trans Atlantic service would had been carried out with bigger, faster and modern ships.

In the past, all the major ships of the HAL had been built by Harland and Wolff and the HAL had sent the design for the new ship, made by Ir.H.N. Prins, to Belfast for a price offer. However, in view of the bad economic situation, the Dutch Government and the public opinion caused the HAL to also ask for offers from Dutch shipyards.

Although Harland and Wolff offered to build the ship at a lower price than the offer of a combination of Dutch shipyards, negotiations started to have the ship built in Holland, without financial disadvantage for the HAL. An agreement was finally reached, whereby the Government would finance 12,2 million Guilders of the 13,5 Guilder building cost, the balance to be partly compensated by the labourers of the ship yard, who would accept a 2½% reduction of their wages and the State who would absorb the rest.

On April 10, 1937, the "Nieuw-Amsterdam" was launched by Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina. The maiden voyage to New York took place on May 10, 1938.

At the outbreak of WW II, the "New-Amsterdam" was cruising in South American waters. The captain was ordered to sail to New York immediately and to disembark the passengers there. Meanwhile the Dutch Government, at that moment in exile in the United Kingdom, negotiated with the British Ministry of War Transport for a war time during charter agreement.

During the war, 530 452 miles were sailed in charter to B.M.W.T., carrying 378 000 troops. See also the information with Noordzee Model Nz 23, "Nieuw-Amsterdam" AP situation 1944.

In April 1946, when most of the troops had been shipped home, the "Nieuw-Amsterdam" returned to Rotterdam, for a general technical overhaul and to be restored in her old glory as Trans Atlantic passenger liner, by the Rotterdamsche Droogdok Maatschappij, which had built the ship nine years previously. It took 17 months at a price which was double that of the original cost price.

The Trans Atlantic service was resumed in October 1947

During the planned five-year surveys, several improvements were made. In 1952, the air-conditioning system was improved. In 1959, stabilisers were added to the hull, the air-conditioning again improved to a point where many of the old type ventilators could be removed and some of the open promenade decks aft were closed with glass. At that time, the accommodation was reshuffled into two classes and the hull, which had been painted black with a yellow band, became gray (without a yellow band in order to save on maintenance).

In the sixties, increasing competition with intercontinental air transportation on the Atlantic stretch, coincided for the HAL with old age troubles of her flagship. After a number of serious breakdowns, the boilers had to be replaced in 1967 and in 1971, the HAL finally decided to close down the Trans Atlantic service permanently, the last crossing to be made in that year.

Cruising became the new trend and the "Nieuw-Amsterdam" was adapted to respond better to that specific demand.

On December 7th, 1973, the ship made its final cruise. The return on investment on these type of sailing's showed a too small result on investment at the time and the HAL decided to sell the ship after 35 years of service. Several groups in Holland tried to save the ship from scrapping by proposing the future use as hotel, conference centre and even Eros-centre.

The "Nieuw-Amsterdam" was laid up in Rotterdam awaiting her final destination, until the company announced the sale to Nan Feng in Kaosioeng on Taiwan for the price of 12 Million Guilders .

On October 5th, 1974, the most beautiful ship that ever sailed the oceans, had been scrapped to the last steel plate.

#### Literature:

Haas, Drs C. de , "De Grote Drie", edited by De Boer Maritiem, ISBN 90 267 2047 4 © Uniboek bv, Postbus 47, NL-3900 DB Houten, Holland.

Herk, C.van , "De Schepen van De Holland Amerika Lijn", edited by De Boer Maritiem, ISBN 90 228 1863 2, © 1981 Uniboek BV.,Bussum, Holland.

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