

The Book of Steamships by Peter Sparre

It was just over six years ago that Peter Sparre was featured in a column in the *Asylum Hill News & Views*. In part it describes his desire to publish a book of his scale drawings of the steamships that traveled the Atlantic Ocean from the late 19th Century until their demise after the Second World War.

It all began when, as a very young child, his parents took him to their native Sweden on the **S.S. Drottningholm**. At the time of our article, Peter had completed more than 175 scale drawings of all the commercial steamers in the Atlantic fleet, including an imaginary one of his own design. It was a dream of his then, and had continued to be, to create this “coffee table” book of his drawings. When I asked him recently when he began this project, he replied, “it began October 16th 1960, and the final work was done on October 20th, 2017”. He then calculated a moment and announced “fifty-seven years”.

If you ask him, he can also tell you how many hour he spent completing each drawing, and that would not include the thousands of hour spent researching details and specifications without the assistance of a computer or the Internet. All of that research is still preserved in the many file cabinets in his apartment. All of it was to ensure that these drawings are as accurate as humanly possible.

So you can imagine his joy and happiness when on April 11th, he stopped by to show me the finished product, *A Tribute to the RMS Queen Mary*



Transatlantic Steamers of the Late 19th and Early 20th Century. By Peter W. Sparre

For anyone to have a career that spans a half-century is amazing enough, but to have had to wait 57 years to finally hold the fruit of that labor is almost unimaginable. What are really unimaginable are the obstacles he had to overcome to realize this lifelong goal. That would be a much longer book, and would have to include all those along the way whose kindness and compassion made it possible.

For photos of some of the drawings and text, go to <https://photos.app.goo.gl/PsC8euyVfy88BLhN7>