



Ship Fact Sheet



STRATHAIRD (1932)

Base data at 10 January 1932. Last amended June 2009

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1932-1961
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Registered owners, managers* and operators*	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Vickers-Armstrongs Ltd
Yard	Barrow-in-Furness
Country	UK
Yard number	664
Registry	London, UK
Official number	162670
Signal letters	LHKV
Call sign	GRSX
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage	22,544 grt
Net tonnage	13,621 nrt
Deadweight	6,230 tons
Length	202.32m (664.0ft) loa; 194.61m (638.7 ft) b/p
Breadth	24.44m (80.2ft)
Depth	14.20m (46.6ft)
Draught	10.081m (33ft 1in)
Engines	2 steam turbines driving electric motors
Engine builders	Vickers-Armstrongs Ltd
Works	Barrow-in-Furness
Country	UK
Electric motor builders	British Thomson Houston
Works	Rugby
Country	UK
Power	28,000 shp
Propulsion	Twin screw
Speed	22 knots
Passenger capacity*	498 first class, 670 tourist class
Cargo capacity	12,486 cubic metres (441,000 cubic feet)
Crew	487 (14 officers, 21 engineers, 82 seamen, 45 firemen and 325 saloon crew)

Employment

London/Australia service

Career

- 14.01.1930: Ordered.
- 23.04.1930: Keel laid.
- 18.07.1931: Launched by Lady Margaret Shaw, daughter of Lord Inchcape, Chairman of P&O, standing in for her mother who was unwell.
- 10.01.1932: Ran trials and delivered as *Strathaird* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. *Strathaird* and her earlier 'white sister' *Strathnaver* differed from anything seen before from P&O; hence the new style names and the revival of the white hull, red waterline and buff funnels formerly seen for two years on *Caledonia* of 1894 and on *Salsette* which ran the Aden/Bombay 'ferry service' from 1908 until the First World War. Their compact boilers necessitated the fitting of dummy first and third funnels to cater for public prejudice against 'less powerful' single funnelled ships. *Strathaird's* name is derived from the title of Sir William Mackinnon, founder of the British India Steam Navigation Company, P&O's largest subsidiary company, and was taken from a headland on Skye.
- 12.02.1932: Maiden voyage London/Brisbane. On her return to the UK she made five cruising voyages.
- 18.07.1933: Made P&O's first outward call at Tangier following pressure from local British residents.
- 1938: Converted to carry chilled beef like later ships in the class.
- 03.1938: A passenger from Bombay died in Fremantle from smallpox; all first class passengers were quarantined, and a planned cruise from Sydney to Fiji in April was cancelled.
- 26.08.1939: Requisitioned by the Ministry of Shipping (later Ministry of War Transport) for service as a troopship.
- 01.1940: Carried the first New Zealand contingent bound for Egypt.
- 05.1940: Evacuated British women and children from Aden to Bombay.
- 29.05.1940: Called from an incomplete refit in Liverpool to Brest where she arrived 17th June. She embarked 6,000 troops, hundreds of civilians, 200 children and the gold from British banks in Paris, landing them on 18th June in Plymouth.
- 03.1941: Collided with *Stirling Castle* in the Clyde and had to abandon her trooping voyage to Suez via the Cape.
- 01.1942: Landed First US Infantry Division in Belfast.
- 11.1942: Took part in the North Africa landings.
- 06.02.1943: Hit by Orient liner *Orontes* which had parted her forward cable during a squall in Glasgow dock.
- 19.02.1943: Minor collision with *Durban Castle* in the Clyde.
- Late 1943: Led the first convoy south through the Suez Canal after the Mediterranean had been declared safe.
- 29.09.1946: Returned to P&O.
- 14.11.1946: Sent to Vickers-Armstrongs Ltd to be refitted and reconditioned.

- During her War service she steamed 623,881km (387,745 miles) and carried 128,961 personnel.
- 20.12.1947: Re-entered commercial service. Her dummy first and third funnels had been removed to give more deck space for passengers. Passenger capacity now 573 first class, 496 tourist class, and new schedules meant she could make four return voyages a year instead of three.
- 17.01.1950: Rescued 18 Cocos Islanders whose boats got into difficulties whilst trying to intercept *Strathaird* to obtain fresh food. They were later disembarked at Perth.
- 03.05.1954: Refitted as a one-class ship. Passenger capacity now 1,252 tourist class, plus 82 children in cots.
- 07.08.1954: Quarantined when she arrived at Fremantle with a suspected case of smallpox among the Goanese crew.
- 02.1958: Evacuated Dutch Nationals from Djakarta to Rotterdam.
- 24.06.1959: Rescued the two crew of a Tiger Moth aircraft which had crashed into the sea off Singapore.
- 09.1959: Delayed in Australia with engine trouble.
- 05.1960: Management and operation transferred to P&O-Orient Line.
- 1961: P&O presented a model of *Strathaird* to the Australia War Memorial in Canberra.
- 24.03.1961: Withdrawal announced.
- 18.06.1961: Last arrival in the UK.
- 21.07.1961: Sold for scrap to Shun Fung Ironworks Co, Hong Kong for £382,500.
- 24.07.1961: Arrived at Hong Kong.
- 17.08.1961: Demolition commenced. Her 15,200 tonnes of steel, melted down and re-rolled, was used for reinforcing bars in the building of skyscrapers in Hong Kong.

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