

TITANIC RELATIVE PHILIP'S MEMORIAL LECTURES

As the ashes of the last surviving passenger from the Titanic Millvina Dean are scattered near the departure point of the fateful voyage, the grandson of the man who rowed her to safety will be making sure her memory remains alive.

Philip Littlejohn, who has become an expert on the world's greatest ocean liner after being fascinated with his grandfather's story, is to play a major role in a cruise that will mark the 100th anniversary of the voyage in 2012.

Millvina Dean was just nine weeks old when Philip's grandfather, Alexander James Littlejohn rowed Lifeboat 13 with her and her mother on board away from the sinking ship to safety. Millvina's father was one of the 1,523 who perished.

Millvina died in May this year – the last living link to the disaster - which has fascinated thousands of people and sparked blockbusting films and books.

Philip Littlejohn will be presenting a series of lectures for people travelling on the Titanic Memorial Cruise on board the MS Balmoral, operated by Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines and organised by Miles Morgan Travel.

Part of his presentation will be Millvina's amazing story where her father went back on to the sinking liner to fetch a flask of milk for his baby before waving them off in Lifeboat 13 never to see them again.

The cruise, which departs on April 8, 2012, marks the 100th anniversary of the sinking of passenger steamship on April 14, 1912, following a fatal collision with an iceberg in the Atlantic. Philip's grandfather worked in the liner's 1st Class dining room.

“Millvina was due to be guest of honour on the Memorial Cruise so it is bittersweet assignment for me,” said Philip, who has written a book *Titanic “Waiting For Orders”* about the ill-fated maiden voyage.

“She was a wonderful person and despite having no memories of the disaster, always said it had shaped her life, because she should have grown up in the US instead of returning to the UK.

“For me, this is the voyage of a lifetime and a chance to revisit a place that means so much to my family.”

Philip will be giving a series of lectures on board the MS Balmoral describing events leading up to the liner’s fateful collision, including eye-witness accounts and the rescue by the Carpathia.

He will also talk about how he was first relative from the Titanic to visit the wreck of the ship, travelling two and a half miles down to the seabed in the submersible used by James Cameron in his film *Titanic*.

Just days before she died Millvina met with travel agent Miles Morgan and arranged to have a cabin on the Memorial Cruise, which will sail to the spot where the passenger steamship went down.

Said Miles Morgan: “She felt the Titanic defined her life and was keen to talk about what it meant to her. She would have been hugely touched to know her ashes are to be scattered close to the spot where the liner departed from Southampton.

“Typical of Millvina she told me if she was unable to make the voyage, that a cabin to be made available to one of her carers in the nursing home. I can confirm we shall be doing this in her honour.”

Millvina, her brother and mother were picked up by the liner Carpathia and taken to New York.

The family, who were travelling third class, were emigrating to Wichita, Kansas, where her father Bertram had family and hoped to open a tobacco shop. Her father, however, did not survive.

The Titanic Memorial Cruise will follow the ship's original route and include a memorial service in the early hours of the morning of April 15, exactly 100 years after the ship sank beneath the waves.

It will make the historic journey with 1,309 paying passengers, the same number that sailed on the fateful Titanic voyage. After the service the cruise continues to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where passengers can visit Fairview Lawn Cemetery where 121 Titanic victims are buried, along with Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery and Hirsch Jewish Cemetery, which also have graves of Titanic victims.

The cruise finally continues to New York, the ultimate planned destination of the original voyage, where it is set for an historic welcome.

The 12-night cruise, including flights at the end of the cruise back to the UK, will cost from £2,595 (approx \$3,902) per person. Interest and demand for this cruise is so high that over 9 grades of cabins have already sold out completely.

For further information visit: www.titanicmemorialcruise.com

ENDS

Issued by Empica Ltd on behalf of Miles Morgan Travel. For further information contact Martin Powell on 01275 394400.

20 October 2009

