

***Andrea Doria* Survivor and Author Seeks Out and Thanks Rescuers of the Greatest Sea Rescue in Peacetime History**

***Andrea Doria* survivor, Pierette Domenica Simpson, is on a quest to seek out those who assisted in the rescue of the capsizing Italian luxury liner 51 years ago, on July 26, 1956. Each rescuer was on a vessel mentioned in her book, *Alive on the Andrea Doria! The Greatest Sea Rescue in History*.**

Novi, Michigan, July 8, 2007—Pierette Domenica Simpson, survivor and the only eyewitness author of the most catastrophic collision in history between two ocean liners, expresses gratitude to rescuers who rushed in dense fog to assist 1706 people that would have otherwise died aboard the capsizing *Andrea Doria*.

The nine-year-old immigrant, traveling with her grandparents was profoundly affected by her harrowing experience. The family lost everything aboard the ‘unsinkable’ liner that capsized off the coast of Nantucket. Simpson explains, “Thanks to the competent and heroic efforts of rescue vessels that traveled in dense fog to arrive at the dangerous site, most passengers, including my family, arrived safely to New York. I will always be grateful. This is why I have also written a short story in an upcoming book series, *Thank God I*, in which I express my gratitude for the rescue.”

To personally thank rescuers of the historic event, Simpson contacted participants from 5 different vessels. To her surprise, one of them had been her Spanish professor ten years after the tragedy. “I was astounded to find out the Professor Leonor McAlpine and I had lived in the same neighborhood, attended the same high school and university, and had taught French and Spanish all of our lives in the Detroit area! I thanked her for being one of the *Ile de France*’s passengers who pulled us through a small hatch at the top of the French luxury liner,” said Simpson.

Other important rescuers recognized by author/survivor Pierette Simpson are:

- Captain Boyd Hempen, then captain of the naval cruiser, *Edward H. Allen*. He ordered his ship to head toward the collision site and remain until the last victims arrived on lifeboats. They included Captain Calamai and some crew of the *Andrea Doria*.
- Young radio officer, Ray Maurstad, on the oil tanker *Robert E. Hopkins*, was the first responder to the SOS from the sinking *Andrea Doria*. He also tended to the last passenger to leave the ghost ship and to arrive traumatized by the ordeal.
- Young 4th assistant engineer, Jimmy Walker, on the Navy troop carrier *William H. Thomas*, rowed a lifeboat twice to the heavily listing Italian liner. He picked up 158 passengers and 10 crewmembers.
- Alfred Pearson and his mother, passengers on the *Stockholm*, the vessel that had rammed the *Andrea Doria*, offered their cabin to a forlorn, young Italian couple. Mr. Pearson was himself feeling distressed after witnessing the entire collision.

To honor survivors and rescuers for their courage and in remembrance of the 51 fatalities, Ms. Simpson has planned a memorial service at Mariners’ Church of Detroit, July 22, 11:00am. This event, which includes a book signing, is open to the public.

Additionally, Simpson will provide information about the aforementioned rescuers to the Roman movie producer who has optioned her book, *Alive on the Andrea Doria!* for world movie rights. “I hope the film will emphasize the role of the rescuers,” adds Simpson.

For further information regarding the greatest sea rescue, contact Pierette Domenica Simpson, gatekeeper of the *Andrea Doria* legacy. www.pierettesimpson.com or www.andreadoriabook.com.

Contact:

Pierette Domenica Simpson

Author of *Alive on the Andrea Doria!* The Greatest Sea Rescue in History

248.349.8557

www.andreadoriabook.com or www.pierettesimpson.com