

Vessel Aground

The Cunard Line's *RMS Franconia* was an imposing vessel with a 20,340 tonne displacement and 192 metres in length, which had made a name for itself in the transportation of troops following the Second World War. In 1945, at the Conference of Yalta, it served as British Headquarters and welcomed Prime Minister Winston Churchill aboard. After the war, it travelled regularly between Quebec and Liverpool.

On Wednesday, July 12, 1950, the *Franconia* left Quebec City with 1,270 passengers and crew on board. At 21:38 hours, thirty-three minutes after leaving Anse-aux-Foulons on an outgoing tide, the ship ran violently aground off the western tip of the île d'Orléans, not far from the Sainte-Pétronille wharf.

Refloating the vessel proved to be a difficult undertaking. However, on Sunday, July 16, on the morning's high tide, it was refloated. It was then repaired in the Davie shipyards in Lauzon. The *Franconia* sailed again that September and went on to ply the North Atlantic for another six years.

This event, which shook the quiet existence of the residents of Sainte-Pétronille, clearly illustrates the delicacy of manoeuvring around the pointe de Lévy, as pilots must take the channel, the currents and the tides into account.