

The Bluff

portsider



SOUTH PORT'S PEOPLE –

Hayden Mikkelsen, Foreshore Road Cold Store Operations Manager

As a perusal of the middle pages in this issue will reveal, South Port recently acquired the former Southland Cold Store facility located on the Foreshore Road adjacent to the Town Wharf. Hayden Mikkelsen has been appointed manager of this plant.

Born in Hamilton Hayden was so anxious to get on with his life that he put in an appearance before the car carrying his mother to hospital actually arrived, proving his management potential right from the outset. Primary education was at Maihihi School in the King Country followed by attendance at Otorohanga College for his secondary schooling. Hayden then enrolled at Canterbury University where he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Employed as a Graduate Engineer by the Electricity Corporation of New Zealand Hayden worked at various hydro-electric power stations in the Waikato. Hayden then moved on to Ballance Agri-Nutrients, initially at the Mount Maunganui facility before transferring to the phosphate plant at Awarua where he was Operations Manager for four years. After twelve years with Ballance Hayden has now moved even further down State Highway 1 to join the South Port team in Bluff.

Married with two young sons Hayden finds one of the attractions of living and working in Southland is the easy access to outdoor pursuits and away from work he enjoys surfing and tramping.



Foreshore Road Cold Store Operations Manager Hayden Mikkelsen.

SOUTH PORT SUPPORTING THE SOUTHLAND STAGS



In late November two members of the Southland Stags visited the Port to present the number 16 jersey to South Port CEO Mark O'Connor and Commercial Manager Nigel Gear.

This is the second year the Port has been involved in the promotion of sponsoring the back of a playing jersey. Over the past two years we have received positive comments about the partnership with customers recognising the South Port logo on the field from far afield.

Also during October customers and suppliers of the Port were invited to our annual Stags rugby fuction. This year we gave all guests who attended the chance to win a replica stags jersey. Congratulations to the lucky recipient who was Rodney Tait of Wilbur-Ellis.

Left: We expect great things from wearers of jersey number 16 this season. Making the presentation to Nigel Gear and Mark O'Connor are John Hardie and Josh Bekhuis.

COVER:

The view from the top.
Crane operator Justin Dimond manoeuvres a forty-foot container aboard an MSC vessel at Bluff.



South Port NZ

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CRUISING



The first cruise ship of the current season to visit Bluff was our old friend the "Orion" and to ensure a warm welcome Bluff turned on cruising weather for her arrival.

"MSC Jenny" approaching her berth, assisted by the South Port tug "Monowai", to claim the title.



THE LONGEST SHIP

MSC Jenny takes the title

With an overall length of 244.74 metres the "MSC Jenny" became the longest vessel to have entered the port of Bluff when she arrived on 17 October. Her tenure as our longest ship was somewhat short as a month later the "White Sea" arrived to take the title. The "White Sea" is also unlikely to have the title for long as MSC has indicated that larger ships are to be deployed on the Capricorn Service through Bluff. In preparation for their arrival a risk assessment was carried out at the new 'Smartship' ship simulation facility in Brisbane to ensure that the port could safely handle vessels of greater size.

THE LONGEST SHIP

The White Sea takes over

When she arrived in Bluff for the first time on 15 November 2012 while operating on MSC's Capricorn Service the container ship "White Sea" set several Bluff records. Her 245 metres overall length made her the longest ship to have entered Bluff, she can carry 3,681 TEU of which 314 may be refrigerated giving her the greatest container capacity of any ship to come here, while her eight cylinder Sulzer main engine has an output of 44,082 b.h.p., which is the highest horsepower of any merchant ship to visit Bluff.

The "White Sea" sails away with the longest ship title



"Esprit Lotus" loading woodchips at Bluff.



THE LONGEST SHIP

Woodchip Style

In recent years woodchip carriers visiting Bluff seem to have come in a standard size of 199.9 metres length overall with a 'Panamax' beam of 32.24 metres but the arrival of the "Esprit Lotus" in November rather broke the mould. While she shared a 'Panamax' beam with her lesser relations her overall length of 210 metres made her the longest of her ilk to visit Bluff and contributed to an increased deadweight of 54,347 tonnes, some 8,000 tonnes more than usual. If gross tonnage is used as the criteria the "Esprit Lotus", at 43,621, became the second largest ship to have visited Bluff.



Thomas Fletcher receiving inward cargo which mostly arrives by road transport



Frozen meat ready for transfer to a cold store.



Cargo being worked in the handling room

BLUFF FC The Foreshore Cold S



Road entrance to the Foreshore Road Cold Stores Complex.

Southland has seen a rapid expansion of the dairy industry in recent years, but there is nothing new about dairy farms in the south. In fact Southland is the home of both the New Zealand cheese and butter industries, with the country's first cheese exporting factory being built at Edendale in 1881 and the first fifty ton consignment of export cheese left in 1883. This was to prove an important year for Southland exporters as on 26 May 1883 the first cargo of frozen mutton left Bluff aboard the New Zealand Shipping Company's full-rigged ship "Opawa".

Following the success of cheese production at Edendale the first major butter-making industry in New Zealand was also developed there during the 1890's. Southland soon became the major dairying province in the South Island with cheese exports through Bluff rapidly expanding, reaching a peak of nearly 16,000 tons in 1935.

By 1915 there were 65 dairy factories operating in Southland and the South Island Dairy Association approached the Bluff Harbour Board to provide cool store facilities for cargo awaiting export in Bluff. At that time all export cargoes were worked over what is now called the "Town Wharf" and after receiving assurances from the dairy factories that they would use the facility the Bluff Harbour Board erected a cool store on reclaimed land to the east of the wharf. The store was opened in November 1915 by Sir Joseph Ward, by then Minister of Finance but formerly Chairman of the Bluff Harbour Board for eleven years from 1883 until 1894. Originally the store

FOCUS ON Shore Road Stores



Zaul Pirangi working at -20°C



Outward cargo being loaded onto rail wagons by Sheldon Ryan-Thoms

had a floor area of 9,400 square feet but it was so well patronised that within two years it had to be extended. Despite its success on 1 October 1923 the Bluff Harbour Board sold the plant to a new co-operative, Southland Cool Stores Limited.

Meanwhile frozen meat exports through Bluff had also expanded. For a time the refrigerated hulk “Edwin Fox”, moored at the Town Wharf, was used to store frozen meat awaiting export but in those days the meat industry generally took care of its own cold store requirements. More recently throughput at Southland freezing works has outstripped storage capacity and frozen meat is often stored elsewhere. After the Island Harbour was opened in 1960, phase two of its development provided for the largest cold stores outside the freezing industry, as detailed in our September 2005 issue (Vol. 25 No. 3). The Southland Cool Stores Limited facility has also undergone considerable expansion and numerous changes over the years allowing it to handle other chilled and frozen products.

The two are now one. During September South Port purchased the Southland Cold Stores business almost doubling South Port’s cold storage capacity and bringing back into the fold a facility its predecessors built. The three Island Harbour cold stores have a capacity of 8,700 tonnes, while the rebranded South Port NZ Foreshore Road Cold Stores can hold 7,650 tonnes and represent a considerably greater investment than the £5,082 – including rail access – the original cool store cost to build.



Rex Fraser and Hannah Whaitiri monitor cargo throughput.

Cargo warehouse number 7 takes shape.



CONSTRUCTED

South Port continues to expand the covered storage facilities it offers clients with the construction of a new bulk storage warehouse – shed number 7.

Although outwardly similar to shed number 4, commissioned four years ago, the new warehouse is designed for bulk cargo and is therefore constructed with load-bearing walls. Dimensions are 137.6 x 43 metres and this new facility represents an investment by South Port of \$4.5 million.

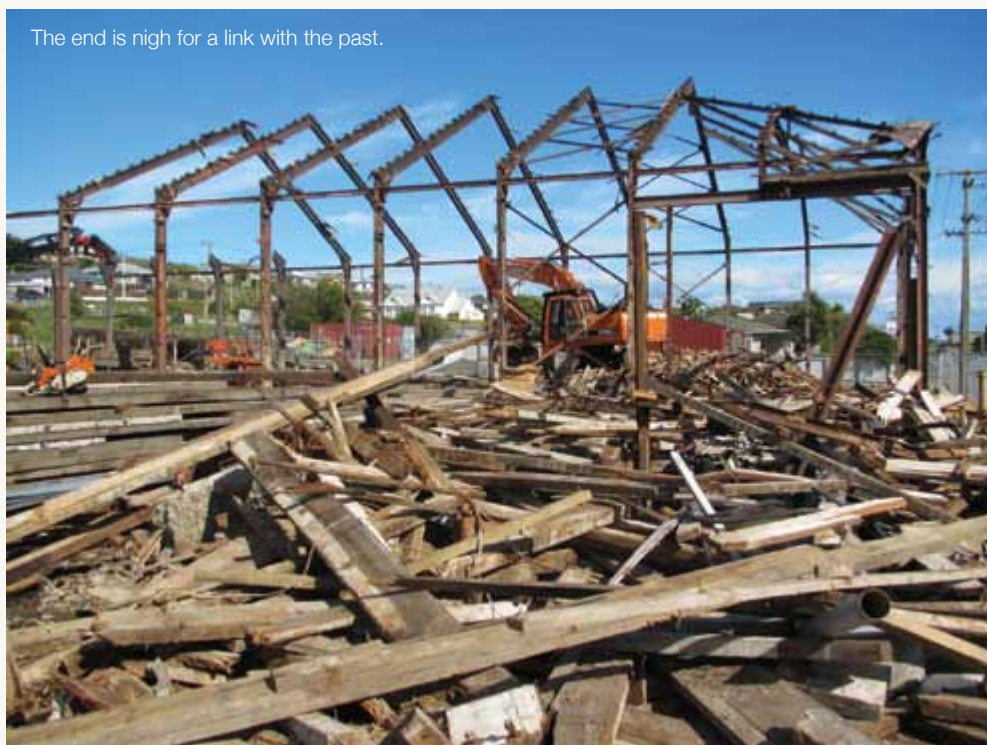
RENAMED

For many years chemical tankers painted in the distinctive yellow hull colour distinguishing the fleet of Stolt Tankers have been visiting Bluff, with a short history of Stolt-Neilsen Tankers and Terminals appearing in the Portsider for September 1995, but the company now has a permanent presence in Bluff. Stolthaven Terminals has taken a 70% shareholding in Marstel Terminals and the caustic soda plant that featured in the September 2010 edition has now been renamed as the accompanying photograph illustrates.



A permanent presence for Stolthaven Terminals in Bluff.

The end is nigh for a link with the past.



DEMOLISHED

One of Bluff's most prominent buildings – some would say one of Bluff's most prominent eyesores – is no more. The former Shaw Savill & Albion Line wool store on Gore Street, which has been used in recent years as a fertiliser store, has been demolished. While it was certainly not one of the leading scenic attractions on State Highway 1 the building represented a link with one of Britain's most prestigious shipping companies and harked back to the days when wool was a leading export through Bluff.

MAIDEN VOYAGE

Bluff was the final port of discharge on the maiden voyage of the “Maple Star”, one of a fleet of modern bulk carriers operated by the Chinese company Maple Leaf Shipping. Completed by the Taizhou Maple Leaf Shipyard she is a ‘handy-size’ bulk carrier of 35,322 deadweight tonnes and arrived here from Lyttelton on 8 October, having worked her way down the New Zealand coast discharging fertiliser as she went.



The “Maple Star” discharges the last of her first cargo to conclude her maiden voyage.

An unusual view of the “Lanna Naree” inbound for Bluff.



SECOND VOYAGE

When the “Lanna Naree” arrived here at the end of December Bluff was her first discharge port of her second voyage. Normally we only illustrate maiden voyages to Bluff but stretching the point allows us to use the rather spectacular photograph taken by Chris Howell of her inbound. This was taken off the stern of our pilot boat and the foam is all wake generated as the sea was actually calm and the wind a gentle zephyr – typical Bluff conditions really.

SISTERS' VOYAGE

Following on from our ‘Identical Twins’ theme in the previous Portsider another sister act has come to town. This time the identical twins were a couple of Singaporeans, the “Maritime Fidelity” and “Maritime Fortune”, which were in Bluff together on the 9th and 10th of October, the “Maritime Fidelity” bringing a cargo of fertiliser and her sister alumina for the Tiwai Smelter.

The pair are handy-size bulk carriers operating with the International Maritime Carriers Group, a brief history of which appeared in the Bluff Portsider for September 1993 (Vol 13 No. 3).

The “Maritime Fidelity” at berth 8 with her sister across the harbour at Tiwai.



E. R.
Schiffahrt
funnel
colours.



E. R. SCHIFFARHT



The "E.R. Brisbane" outbound assisted by the South Port tugs "Hauroko" and "Monowai".

Rickmers is one of the most famous names in German shipping. It is also one of the oldest and the origin of the Rickmers involvement in shipping can be traced back to Rickmer Clasen Rickmers who was born on Heligoland in 1807, the same year in which the little archipelago off the German coast was seized by Britain during the Napoleonic Wars. After being trained in wooden shipbuilding on Heligoland Rickmer Rickmers went to sea for practical experience of working a ship. In 1831 he settled in the newly founded town of Bremerhaven where he established the Rickmers Shipyard in 1834, subsequently expanding into ship-owning which led to the founding of 'Rickmers Rhederei' in 1849. After years of general trading, during the 1860's Rickmers Rhederei entered the rice trade from South East Asia taking out general goods, often on the company's own account, and returning with rice which was subsequently sold to European mills. This began the Rickmers association

with the trade route between Europe and the Far East which continues to this day.

Upon his death in 1886 Rickmer Clasen Rickmers bequeathed to his sons Peter and Andreas a substantial company with interests in ship-owning, ship-building, trading and rice-milling and today Rickmers remains a family-owned shipping company managed by the fifth generation of Rickmers to control its fortunes. Among them is Erck Rickmers who established his own fleet under the title E. R. Schiffahrt.

In 1992 Erck Rickmers founded Nordcapital as an investment company and, given the Rickmers family association with shipping, the major proportion of Nordcapital's investments is in shipping, particularly in E. R. Schiffahrt, which began operations in 1998. Initially the company focused on building container ships for charter to major liner operators and its first ship was the "E. R. Hamburg" of 2,226 TEU

delivered in 1998. Due to the financial strength of Nordcapital the expansion of E. R. Schiffahrt was such that it rapidly became one of the biggest shipping companies in the world and currently owns some of the largest container ships afloat.

In 2006 E. R. Schiffahrt decided to diversify its shipowning activities to include the offshore industry and dry bulk shipping. The first platform supply vessels were delivered by their Norwegian builders in 2008 and the offshore division now comprises thirteen vessels, including two large Anchor Handling Tug and Supply vessels. In 2009 the "E. R. Bergamo" became the first of eleven 'Supra-Max' class bulk carriers to join the fleet, later to be joined by ten 'Capesize' vessels of 180,000 tons deadweight and others to give a total of twenty-five bulk carriers with a total deadweight of over 2.6 million tonnes. Despite these impressive statistics it is the container fleet that dominates and it currently numbers one hundred and eight vessels, including the original "E. R. Hamburg". Not surprisingly, a number of these container ships operate under charter to Rickmers Reederei.

During 2012 the ship management activities of E. R. Schiffahrt and Komrowski Group were brought together within the Komrowski-owned Blue Star Holding Group, the total fleet under management comprising some ten million tonnes deadweight making Blue Star Holding Germany's largest shipping group. Blue Star Holding is the current incarnation of the Blue Star Line whose fleet of refrigerated cargo liners were once a familiar sight in New Zealand ports. The presence of E. R. Schiffahrt container ships on MSC's Capricorn Service through Bluff therefore not only brings a connection with one of Germany's oldest shipping companies but also revives memories of perhaps the most distinctive funnel colours ever seen in the port of Bluff.

The "E.R. Fremantle" working at the container terminal.

