

The Bluff PORTSIDER

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INSIDE ►

CHANGING GEARS

OUR PEOPLE

BLUFF FOCUS ON:

Bluff Channel Deepening Project

A HISTORY OF CONTAINERISATION



▶ CHANGING GEARS

Kia ora koutou katoa,

30 June is our annual balance date, which means that July and August is always a busy time of the year for the finance team at South Port. Once we hit 1 July, the stopwatch is on to complete the year end accounts, work with the auditors, and release our results to the NZX, all within 60 days of our balance date.

On 25 August we released our annual result, recording a Net Profit After Tax (NPAT) of \$12.83 million, which is a 19.7% increase on the FY2021 result (\$10.71 million), and ahead of guidance provided at the half-year mark. Without the non-recurring items, normalised NPAT is \$11.16 million (FY2021 \$10.45 million) which is up 6.7%. Earnings Per Share is 49 cents (FY2021 41cps). This is a very pleasing result and as the Chair, Rex Chapman, noted in our press release, "it has been especially pleasing to see the high levels of resilience shown in the face of operational challenges."

While this work is underway, the communications and executive team are working on the content for the Annual Report (also on a timeline) which must be sent out to shareholders within 90 days of our balance date. This is another large undertaking, which the team takes a lot of pride developing each year.

The 2022 annual result commentary and the Annual Report can be viewed at: www.southport.co.nz/communication-centre

In the March 2022 issue of the Portsider, the Company noted that we were waiting for the arrival of a Heron Construction backhoe dredge at the Port to carry out dredging in the harbour entrance channel. This was to complete work for an existing consent to remove fragmented rock from a previous blasting campaign in the early 1980s.

It is pleasing to say that it has been a very successful campaign. It is highly likely that we will now achieve 9.7M chart datum in the harbour entrance channel (currently 8.7M) without drilling and blasting. This is a significant milestone as this is the depth that was targeted for project Kia Whakaū, the subject of the resource consent that was granted on 31 August 2022 (notified to NZX on 1 September 2022). Further commentary on this successful campaign is contained within this issue of the Portsider.

In the July 2021 issue of the Portsider, we celebrated Peter Cade's 40 years of service at the Port. In this latest issue, we now celebrate and recognise Blair Cousins's 43 years of working at South Port. Blair is a well-known employee, working many years in the infrastructure division before serving out his final years at the syncrolift. 43 years of loyalty to one company is a special achievement and it is always a sad occasion to see them leave the Company. Blair's good humour, friendly face and competitiveness around the pool table will be missed by all that know him well at the Port.

Similarly, we have just seen the retirement of Jeremy McClean from the Board of Directors at the Annual Shareholders Meeting on 1 November. Jeremy was appointed to the board in September 2011 and has served as Chair of the audit and risk committee from 2017. Jeremy has been an asset to the Board during his tenure, a great supporter of the Company and the Leadership team, and will be missed.

Finally, it is fantastic to see restrictions easing at the border post the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of our staff have had to 'bear the brunt' of these restrictions being separated from their families for a number of years, which has been a difficult and stressful time. Eduardo Queluz, our environmental engineer has been separated from his family in Brazil for three years, and they were finally reunited in Auckland on 8 October.

Ngā mihi nui,
Nigel Gear

Eduardo Queluz and his family, upon their arrival to New Zealand on 8 October



COVER: GPK De Donge 'B' Type Backhoe Dredger, operated by Heron Construction Company Ltd while maintenance dredging in Bluff.

IMAGE CREDIT: Tammi Topi - SouthDrone NZ

The Bluff Portsider is compiled by:

South Port NZ Ltd
PO Box 1, Bluff 9842
(03) 212 8159
reception@southport.co.nz
www.southport.co.nz

Chief Executive: Nigel Gear

Edited and produced by: Charlotte Scoles

Contributors: D A Edge, G E McLeod and C Scoles



▶ OUR PEOPLE

WELCOME

Bob Bowen - Senior Launch Master - August
Josh Nielsen - Launch Master - August
Mark Edmiston - Launch Crew/Relief Launch Master - August
Shaun McKellar - Syncrolift Operator - September

INTERNAL CHANGES

Debbie Sutherland - Cold Stores Operator - September
Luke Turner - Cold Stores Operator - September
Paul Lester - Health and Safety Advisor - November

LONG SERVICE RECOGNITION

Rob Goodman - 20 year anniversary - August
Te Ratu Sikisini - 20 year anniversary - November
Hayden Mikkelsen - 10 year anniversary - November

▶ CELEBRATING RETIREMENT

After 43 years with South Port, Blair Cousins is closing the chapter on a long and impressive career.

Turn back the clock to 1979, and a 19-year-old Blair applied for the Engineering Technician/Cadet position with the Southland Harbour Board. Blair found it “virtually impossible” to gain a job in the engineering field in Nelson (his home then), so he decided to venture further afield and set up in the deep south.

Many of us got to know Blair very well around the smoko table, where there was a lot of great banter and some very competitive pool and dart matches. Blair had such incredible success on the pool table that we were sure he was adjusting the levels between smoko breaks at times!

Blair was also an integral part of the social club committee. In the early days, the social club included work colleagues and their partners, who were always looking at ways to get staff connecting outside of the typical workday. Blair was always in the thick of organising events, especially the annual picnic and Christmas function, which had a heavy focus on family and were a great tradition for many years.

A lot has changed since Blair first started... the Island Harbour was only in stage 2 of its development, a significant project that kept Blair and other engineers busy into the early eighties. After this, he moved into the role of Port Services Engineer, supervising



Blair Cousins, October 2022

contractors as they completed capital works, repairs, and maintenance.

Blair has been responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Syncrolift facility since 2018 and was a qualified Dockmaster at the time of his retirement. Over the past couple of years, Blair has spent time training and transitioning Rob Dixon to ensure the facility is in safe hands as he departs.

Bluff is home now, and his youngest son Phillip still lives here with his three children. His eldest son Bryce lives in Rotorua with his family (including a baby on the way), and his daughter Renee lives in Christchurch with two children.

Outside of work, Blair enjoys reading, constructing models of ships, and DIY around the house. The Bluff Volunteer Fire Brigade was a big part of his life for 20 years, with lots of socialising in the early days resulting in lifelong friendships. Blair appreciated that South Port supported him and other fire and ambulance volunteers when they needed time off for emergency callouts.

We wish Blair all the best and can not thank him enough for his 43 years of devoted, loyal service to South Port.

▶ TWO 20-YEAR ANNIVERSARIES!

Te Ratu Sikisini – Raa to his mates – started at the Foreshore Road Cold Stores on 4 November 2002 and came across to South Port when we purchased the business from Southland Cool Stores in September 2012.

At Foreshore Road, Raa held the position of Foreman, leading a large team of permanent and seasonal operators.

When South Port combined our Cold Store operations in 2018, Raa relocated to the Island Harbour. As a senior member and leading hand, Raa played a crucial role in ensuring a smooth transition and helped set the foundations for the success we enjoy today.

Raa is a steady, reliable, and well-respected staff member – the ultimate team player. In 2021 the Leadership Team awarded Raa with a “Values Recognition Award”, publicly acknowledging his cold stores experience, expertise, and commitment to teamwork.

He had the chance to transfer to the Depot team when an opening arose in early 2021 but pulled out of the race to see out the busy cold stores season. This meant he was on hand to assist in the stocktake, a massive logistical exercise, and also gave us valuable extra time to train up his replacements – not easy considering the size and complexity of our operations. Even though there were no guarantees of future vacancies, Raa acted selflessly and put the team’s interests ahead of his own.

In mid-2021, Raa transferred to the Depot team, where his experience and calm demeanour strongly influenced the group.

What’s the best part of the job?

My family and I are proud to be Bluffies, and living and working in the local community is excellent. The fact that I work 5 minutes away from home is a real bonus, which means I can spend more time with my family and friends in Bluff.

What do you find challenging?

Every job has its ups and downs; I always try to go with the flow, but I’m not afraid to speak up when it matters.

What keeps you busy outside of work?

I like tinkering with cars and motorbikes – I have a motorbike, but unfortunately, I don’t get to ride it as often as I’d like to!

I have six children ranging in age from 32 down to 4 – and I also have five grandchildren up in Huntly I’d love to spend more time with – maybe that’s a good reason for a road trip?

Congratulations, Raa – thank you for your loyalty and hard work over the past 20 years. It’s great having you on our team!



Robert Goodman - Rob started as a casual in the Cold Stores, initially working alongside his father, Riki. Back then, it was mainly fish – unloading fish boats, sorting, and loading containers.

Rob transferred to the Dairy Warehousing Department in 2008 and was involved from the get-go when South Port took on the Open Country Dairy contract for receiving, storing, and loading export products. Looking back, he saw this as his first opportunity for progression within the Company, first moving into leading hand responsibilities before stepping up as Acting Supervisor while Misty Johnson was on maternity leave in 2012.

Rob was offered the chance to train on heavy machinery, including the first Liebherr mobile harbour crane. Soon afterward, an opening in the crane maintenance team came up, and Rob didn’t look back! Fast forward to today, and Rob’s role in the fleet maintenance team involves servicing and maintaining our fleet of large and small forklifts and harbour cranes, including training, coaching, and mentoring our ‘next generation’ crane operators.

Rob is one of our top performers and has been recognised for several special recognition awards for his teamwork and for consistently going the extra mile.

What’s the best part of the job?

It’s undoubtedly challenging, there’s much variety, especially with the interaction with other departments, and nowadays, there’s the rotation of crane trainees. Most of the work is routine maintenance, and we’re up-to-speed with that, but there are also unforeseen and unplanned repairs, such as when gear belonging to [a third party] breaks down. And we have a great group of guys, an excellent team, and everyone gets on and work in with each other.

What do you find challenging?

Breakdowns are always challenging, and the downtime and loss of productivity – like earlier in 2022 when we had to order parts from Germany that took over a week to arrive, the rest was frustrating. Fortunately, we learned from that and are much more organised nowadays and carry extra spare parts to manage the risk better.

What keeps you busy outside of work?

My two boys, aged 15 and 10, are a big part of my life, and I’m proud of them. We’re into motorbike riding. I’m into motorsports, and I’ve competed in the Burt Munro street racing and Bluff Hill climb – my goal for 2023 is to have a good crack at it next year, and hopefully, the locals will get behind me!

Congratulations on this milestone, Rob!



▶ 2022 ANNUAL SHAREHOLDERS' MEETING

On Tuesday, 1 November, we held our 34th Shareholders' Annual General Meeting here at South Port.

Director, Mr Jeremy McClean, elected to retire from the Board of Directors. Jeremy was elected to the Board in 2011. He has been a valuable contributor to the Company's success over his tenure and has been a member of the Audit & Risk Committee and then Chair of that committee for the last six years.

Jeremy's background as an accountant and valued business advisor to the farming sector, together with his sound business judgment and values, are attributes that all of us have appreciated.

We will miss his contribution and company around the board table, and we wish him well.

A valid nomination was received from Mr John Schol, who, at the AGM, was successfully elected to the Board of Directors. John holds a Master of Business Administration, a Fellow Chartered Accountant, a Certificate of Public Practice with Chartered Accountants Australia New Zealand, and a Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors.

Mr Philip Cory-Wright and Mrs Clare Kearney were successfully reelected after retiring by rotation following the Company's constitution.



South Port Chair, Rex Chapman, making his opening presentation at the AGM

▶ OFFICIAL SOUTH RAIL OPENING

On Friday, 14 October, we celebrated the completion of the South Rail Log Yard. This redevelopment saw 17,000m² upgraded from gravel surface to asphalt. Pictured here is Ernslaw One Regional Manager, Phil De La Mare, left, and Rayonier Matariki Forests Regional Manager, Hamish Fitzgerald, right, officially cutting the ribbon.



► BLUFF FOCUS ON BLUFF CHANNEL DEEPENING PROJECT

Earlier this year, South Port contracted Heron Construction Company Ltd to remove the fractured or fragmented rock in the Port entrance channel from previous dredging campaigns.

The aim was to remove any already blasted or fragmented rock that remained in the channel from previous 'capital dredging' campaigns over 40 years ago. Blasting of the channel, which started in the 1970's and finished in the late 1980's, saw some fragmented rock unable to be retrieved due to the engineering limitations of dredging machinery available at the time.

These limitations were highlighted in October, toward the end of the project, when the team at Heron Construction retrieved an old bucket (refer to photo 6) that originated off the 'Murihiku' - South Port's old resident bucket dredge vessel, that was most certainly among the most powerful and up-to-date dredges in the Southern Hemisphere at the time. The 'Murihiku' was purpose-built in Scotland, in 1904, specifically for Bluff. It spent its 73-year working life in the region, before being decommissioned in 1978.

The latest project commenced on 21 August 2022 and was projected to end in late September; however, it officially ended on 14 October. There were several variables associated with a project such as this, foremost of which, was the uncertainty of the extent of the fragmented rock and therefore the timeline was subject to change.

Much to the delight of South Port, the campaign achieved a 9.7m chart datum (CD) in the harbour entrance channel.

This was a significant milestone as this is the depth that was targeted for project Kia Whakaū, the subject of the resource consent that was granted on 31 August 2022.

Kia Whakaū is a project to dredge and remove seabed materials to

9.7m CD in the harbour entrance channel, which included drilling and blasting as required, 10.7m CD in the Island Harbour berth basins, and 9.45m CD in the swinging basin.

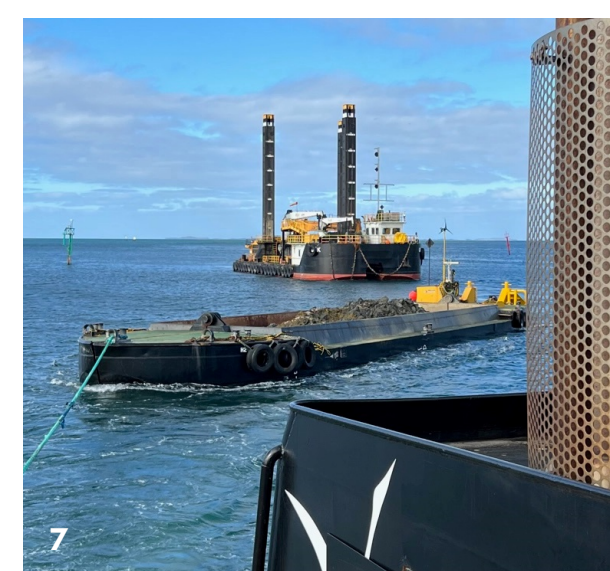
Owing to the success of this most recent project, the drilling and blasting activity required for project Kia Whakaū is unlikely to be required under the new consent granted. This is a very exciting development for the Port and will have the potential to significantly reduce the cost of the project going forward.

South Port will now contract a suction dredge to deepen the swinging basin and berth pockets under the new resource consent, which is expected to be completed in the second half of 2023, to allow for larger cargo volumes and vessels to transit through the Port.

The majority of the dredged rock and material was relocated not far from the mouth of the Bluff Channel; however, some rock was taken and has been stored on land as it was identified that it could be utilised to repair sea walls or processed into gravel for use in port pavement projects.

The team at Heron Construction Company Ltd worked around the clock, and we thank the entire team for their efforts, along with the Bluff community for their support throughout this project.

1. Hopper load of material dredged from channel, ready to be relocated
2. The dredge, named the GPK, working in the Bluff Channel
 - Photo credit: Tammi Topi - SouthDrone NZ
3. The Tug, Iona M, towing hopper away from the GPK
4. Inside the cab of the GPK, with screens showing what area can be dredged
5. South Port Chair, Rex Chapman, and Director, Jeremy McClean paid a visit to the GPK backhoe dredge as it entered its final days at the Port
6. The old bucket found, of which originated from the old 'Murihiku' dredge
7. Iona M towing hopper away from the GPK
8. Hopper load of rock dredged from channel, which was blasted in the 80s
9. Iona M working hard on a stunning Bluff evening
 - Photo credit: Tammi Topi - SouthDrone NZ



▶ THE CHINA NAVIGATION COMPANY TURNS 150



The "Luchow" berthing at Tiwai under the bow of the "Moning"

The China Navigation Company has been trading with Bluff for longer than any other shipping company still in existence. The first company ship to call here was the "Tamsui," which arrived on 18th August 1885 with tea from China, returning the following year with a similar cargo.

Something of a hiatus followed before trading resumed with the arrival of the "Kwangsi" on 22nd May 1962. After that, a regular liner service ran from Bluff and other New Zealand Ports to Japan and Hong Kong via way Ports which continued into the 1980's, by which time multi-purpose ships capable of carrying break-bulk and containerised cargo were operating on the route. Modern, multi-purpose vessels now maintain this service and are occasional visitors to Bluff, but bulk carriers predominate these days, displaying the company's colours in Bluff.

Locally, Swire also has the trans-tasman 'Chief' container ships while trading on the New Zealand coast are the cement ship "Aotearoa

Chief" and the container ships "Moana Chief" and "Takutai Chief," the latter two operating the coastal services of Pacifica Shipping, the formerly Lyttelton-based company recently acquired by Swires. The parent company of China Navigation is the Swire Group, formerly John Swire & Sons and once Butterfield & Swire, founded in 1816 and now a vast conglomerate with property investments – mainly in Hong Kong, aviation – notably Cathay Pacific Airways, and numerous others including, of course, shipping.

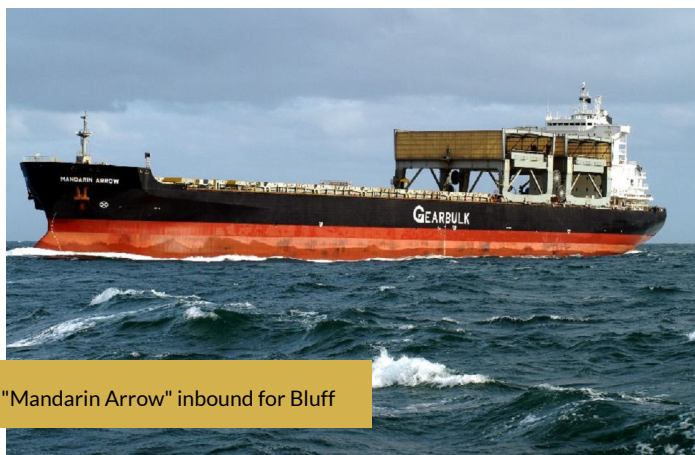
Since 2006 when the shipping interests of the group were concentrated under the title Swire Shipping the structure overseeing its maritime interests has been vested in the China Navigation Company. This renowned company is celebrating this year as 2022 marks 150 years since the China Navigation Company was floated on the London Stock Exchange in 1872 with a capital of £360,000 fully subscribed.

The following year, services began on the Yangtze Kiang with the sailing of the small paddle steamer "Tunsin." Remarkably, few shipping companies have survived so long, and symbolizing the company's durability in an often turbulent industry is the Swire house flag which has remained unchanged throughout the company's existence. Now all that's left to do is find someone to blow out 150 candles.

▶ TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE 5TH GENERATION

For those who recall the arrival of the "Mandarin Arrow," the first of Gearbulk's '5th Generation' ships to call in Bluff, it seems to have been only a few years back. Hence, it comes as a shock to realise it happened last century, on the 19th of April 1997, to be precise. At least that explains the grey hair, lack of hair, or both, as the case may be.

From a pilot's viewpoint, they were a radical departure from the norm – a 50,000-tonne bulk carrier with a bow thruster powerful enough to have some effect and a high-lift rudder that acted like a stern thruster. As the term '5th Generation' indicates, these were not the first Gearbulk ships, not even the first with gantry cranes, as gantry-equipped Gearbulk ships have been visiting Bluff since the early 1980s. The '5th Generation' ships were built in China from 1994 to 1997, with nine in the class originally, all of which have visited Bluff and continue to do so except for the "Toucan Arrow," sold for further trading in 2018. Being of open hatch design, the two forty-tonne capacity gantry cranes can land cargo in its stowed position in the ten holds, and they usually visit Bluff to load aluminum at Tiwai Wharf. Since 2018 Gearbulk has been the majority partner in G2 Ocean A/S, formed with fellow Norwegian bulk carrier operators Greig Star.



"Mandarin Arrow" inbound for Bluff

▶ FAREWELL TO THE "ORETI"

At the beginning of August, we farewelled the "Oreti" as she departed for her new home in Auckland.

Built in 1980 as "Corio," she relocated to Bluff from her namesake location, Corio Bay, Australia, in early 1991. The "Oreti" came from five sister ships, was 11.38m x 4.05m x 1.64m in size, and was fitted with a Detroit Diesel running 172kW. The "Oreti" was used to tow the barge out to the spoil ground behind Tiwai to dump dredgings, for maintenance of navigation marks, and as a general work boat. We wish the "Oreti" well in her future endeavors.



▶ FEEDING THE FISHES

Aquaculture is a major industry around the world and has spawned a fleet of distinctive support vessels supplying fish food and other necessities to these maritime farms. Locally our largest and best-known aquaculture base is across the strait on Stewart Island where Sanford has numerous salmon-raising cages located in Big Glory Bay, while a newly-built fish farm tender recently delivered to Bluff from its Vietnamese builders' glories in the name "San Little Glory". Bulk supplies for the salmon farms also come through Bluff and recently we were visited by the first ship designated a 'Fish Farm Support Vessel' to call at the Port.

The ship in question was the "Eidsvaag Omega", which also had the distinction of being the first overseas ship to use berth 1 this century. Built in 2017 by Partner Stocznia in the town of Police, Poland – yes, Police is the name of the town and comes from the Proto-Slavic word Pole, meaning field, while the Polish constabulary is known as Policja – on the Oder River in the northwest of the country the "Eidsvaag Omega" was completed as the general cargo ship "Baltic" for Dutch owners. Her rebuilding as a Fish Farm Support Vessel followed her purchase by Norwegian owners Eidsvaag AS in 2020 and she now flies the Marshall Islands flag with her Port of registry being Majuro.



▶ AN AWARD-WINNING TOWN WHARF

Congratulations to the team at Brian Perry Civil on winning awards at three separate events:

- The \$5-\$20M project category at the New Zealand Civil Contractors National Awards in August
- The Award for Excellence in Structural Projects at the Civil Contractors Southland Regional Awards in October
- The Innovation Award and the Contracts over \$5M Award at the CCNZ Canterbury and Westland HYNDS and Hirepool Contractor of the Year Awards in November

This recognition is a true reflection of the time, effort, and planning put in by Brian Perry Civil, and we thank them again for what they achieved. Our upgraded petroleum berth looks amazing!



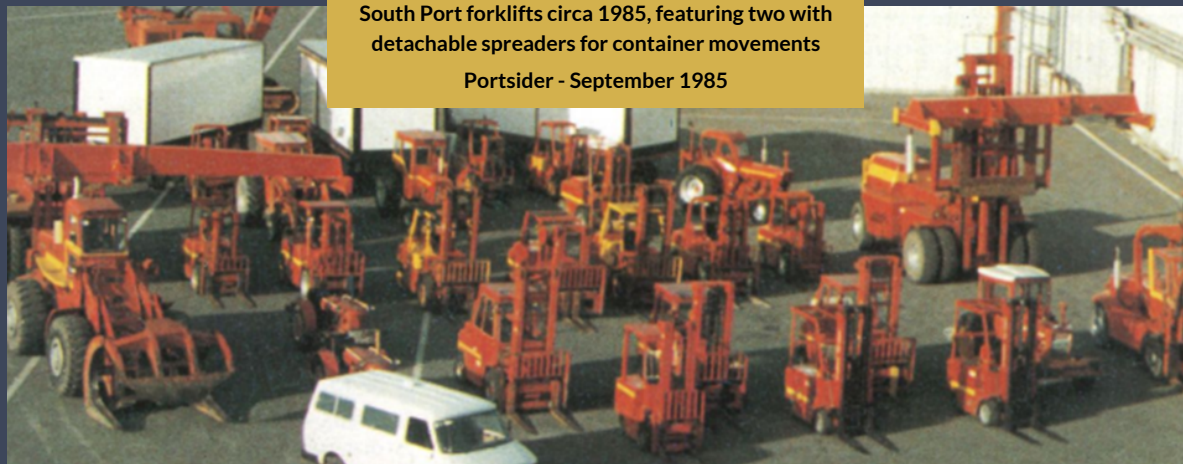
The new Lees heavy-duty forklift, used for handling containers from 1987

Portsider - May 1987



South Port forklifts circa 1985, featuring two with detachable spreaders for container movements

Portsider - September 1985



Container vessel "T. A. Explorer" heading out to sea

Portsider - January 1989



"Rangiora" loading and discharging containers at Berth 4

Portsider - September 1995



A HISTORY OF CONTAINERISATION AT SOUTH PORT ► PART ONE

In 1956, an entrepreneurial trucker named Malcolm McLean sought a cost-effective means to move cargo between New Jersey and Texas. He loaded 58 trailer bodies onto a World War II vintage tanker called the "Ideal X", marking the start of 'containerisation.'

Almost thirty years later, back in New Zealand, the containerised cargo was ramping up. At South Port, the number of containers passing over the Port had increased by 89%, going from an average of 200 units in previous years to 1823 units in 1983. At this point, South Port had no dedicated container pad. Berth 8 was the usual platform for this traffic; however, Berths 4 and 3a were occasionally used to load and discharge containers.

Due to the increase in container traffic, a Lees D65 30-tonne, the heavy-duty forklift, was delivered to the Port of Bluff in May 1987.

In 1989, Bluff saw the introduction of two new shipping companies. The first was the F.E.S.C.O. Shipping Line, serving Asia through the Russian Far East, with the "Nikolay Malakov" and "Kapitan Baoievskiy" calling monthly to pick up containerised wool, stopping the need for this particular product to be railed up to Port Chalmers.

The second was the Tasman Asia Shipping Line, which scheduled a monthly call to Bluff to load containerised aluminium, cargo, and bulk cargo. Four vessels were assigned to this route - the "T.A. Navigator," "Mariner," "Explorer," and "Voyager."

As a point of interest, 1988 was also the final year that the Southland Harbour Board existed as a trading identity, changing its name to South Port New Zealand Ltd.

In May 1992, the Trans-Tasman service of the South Pacific Shipping Company was inaugurated with the arrival of the "Rangitikei." However, a victim of her

popularity, she proved too small to handle a number of containers coming out of Bluff to the Australian market. She was replaced after six voyages by the more prominent "Rangitata."

In March 1993, a weekly service out of Bluff was introduced when the "Rangitikei" returned to join the "Rangitata" in the Sydney to Melbourne run. As the trade through Bluff continued to increase, the "Rangitikei" was replaced by the "Ranginui" in September 1994, which offered an increased capacity of 256 Twenty-Foot Equivalent Containers (TEUs). In turn, the "Ranginui" also proved too small and was replaced a year later by the "Rangiora," with nearly 100 additional container slots, of which 20 could be used for reefers.

Around the same time, the Dutch company Nedlloyd introduced two container ships to their service between Bluff and South East Asia. These vessels were the "Nedlloyd Van Diemen" 23,790 gross tonnes, and the "Nedlloyd Van Noort" 23,790 gross tonnes.

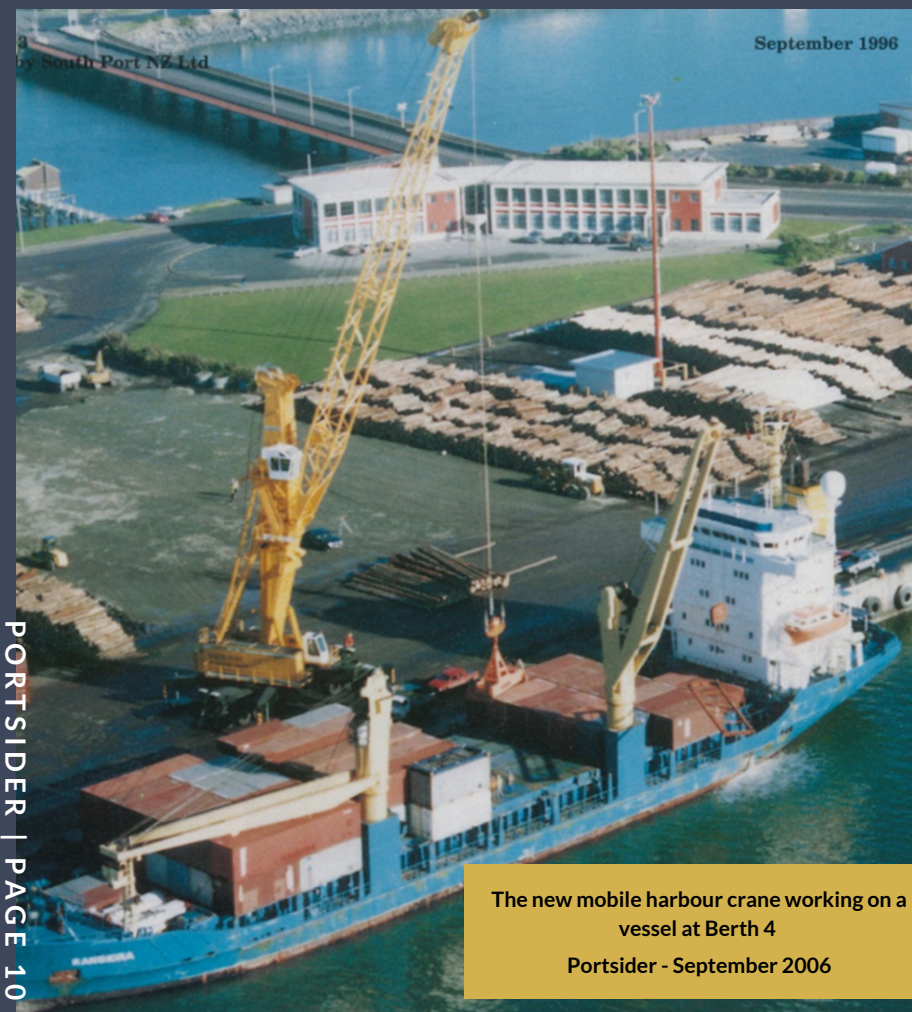
The total number of containers handled at South Port grew from 3,487 in 1995 to 6,265 units in 1996, an increase of 80%. This increase in container numbers prompted the \$5.5 million investment of purchasing a new Liebherr LHM 1300 mobile harbour crane to service this growth in business, with said crane arriving in November 1995.

The crane was delivered by the "Spirit of Vision" in kit-set form, and was assembled under the direction of Liebherr engineers before being officially handed over to South Port on 5 December 1995. It was particularly suited for container handling, with a fully automatic telescopic spreader for 20, 30, or 40-foot containers. 49 tonnes could be lifted - out to a radius of 32 metres and 24.5 tonnes to 45 metres. It was also equipped for grab operation.

Part two of the history of containerisation at South Port will be covered in the March 2023 Portsider.

"Ranginui" berthing in Bluff for the first time

Portsider - September 1994



The new mobile harbour crane working on a vessel at Berth 4

Portsider - September 2006



The newly purchased Liebherr LHM 1300 mobile harbour crane, servicing a Nedlloyd line vessel at Berth 8

Portsider - January 1996



J. LAURITZEN BULKERS

Danish shipowner J. Lauritzen first appeared on this page of 'The Bluff Portsider' in Volume 2 Number 1, dated January 1982, just the fourth 'Portsider' to be published. That article was to celebrate ten years' service from Bluff to Japan by Lauritzen's refrigerated ships, their function plain to see as their names all carried the suffix 'Reefer'. That tradition continues today but now the ships are bulk carriers and the suffix is 'Bulkier'. Lauritzen has operated many other ship types through the years including polar ships, oil tankers, gas carriers, drilling ships and rigs, semi-submersible heavy load carriers and a cruise ship, but today it is the bulk carriers that prevail.

As a ship type the bulk carrier was far in the future when Ditlev Lauritzen established a small timber company in the Danish Port town of Esbjerg in 1884. Because of his age, he was only 24, Ditlev had to register the company in his father Jorgen's name, and so J. Lauritzen A/S was born. Initially the company traded in timber, coal, building equipment and agricultural supplies, much of it imported in chartered ships. Preferring to use his own vessels Ditlev moved into ship-owning in 1888 with the steamer "Uganda," but it was not an auspicious start as she sank a few months later. However, a new ship was ordered, and by the end of the century eight ships carried Lauritzen colours and ship-owning had become the primary business of the company.

The First World War caused heavy shipping losses and anticipating a

The "African Reefer" at Bluff in September 1961
Photo: Maitland Downes



post-war boom Lauritzen built a new shipyard near Copenhagen which opened in 1921 but the high construction cost resulted in its sale two years later. Lauritzen's ambition to have its own ship construction facility was realised more successfully in 1937 when the Aalborg Vaerft shipyard was purchased. This yard stayed in the Lauritzen Group until closure in 1988, one of its last deliveries being the "Arahura", still regarded by many as the finest rail ferry ever built for Cook Strait service.

During the 1920's trade expanded to the Mediterranean and Africa, the ships generally taking coal south often returning with oranges or bananas and such was the demand for fruit that a regular service began. With this trade showing great promise the newly built ship "Ulla" was fitted with refrigerating machinery to become the first reefer in the Lauritzen fleet. The 'Reefer' suffix was introduced in 1935 and the first seen in Bluff on the "Indian Reefer" in February 1961. Many Lauritzen 'Reefers' were loaded in Bluff during the next forty years, the last being the "Chilean Reefer" in

2001. Since then all the Lauritzen ships calling here have been bulk carriers, in fact every Lauritzen ship to call here has been either a 'Reefer' or a 'Bulkier' except one, the "Magga Dan". One of the company's renowned polar ships the "Magga Dan" was built as a passenger-cargo/polar expedition ship and in 1967 the New Zealand shipping company Holm & Co. chartered her to make the first ever commercial tourist voyages to Antarctica.

Most of the passengers were Americans, with the "Magga Dan" departing Lyttelton in early January 1968, returning to Bluff on 4 February to change passengers before departing for the Antarctic again, concluding that cruise back in Bluff on 3 March 1968. To improve their visibility in ice the polar ships were painted bright red and this was later adopted for the entire fleet.

After building the biggest refrigerated ships afloat during the 1990's Lauritzen acquired Cool Carriers in 2001 making it the largest operator of refrigerated ships in the world, but in 2007 decided to quit this sector in favour of bulk carriers.

Lauritzen's first bulk carrier was the "Silja Dan" bought in 1973 and a new company, Lauritzen Bulkiers, was formed in 1982 as the brand name for Lauritzen's bulk carriers.

The 'Bulkier' suffix was applied to all owned and most chartered bulk carriers, first appearing in Bluff in February 2002 when the "Hudson Trader" was renamed "View Bulkier". Since then the Lauritzen 'Bulkier' has become as familiar in Bluff as its 'Reefer' once was.



The "Hokkaido Bulkier" approaching her berth, while the Asian Bulkier waits at the Town Wharf