

The Bluff PORTSIDER

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INSIDE ►

Changing Gears

50 years' experience combined

Scholarship recipients

Bluff Focus on:

CRUISE SHIPS IN BLUFF

An 'Espresso Martini' to go



▶ CHANGING GEARS

Kia ora koutou katoa,

On 16 February, we released our profit announcement for the first six months of FY2024 at \$3.0M (FY2023 \$5.2M). This is a significant decrease, and reflective of the current economic conditions, both locally and internationally.

When analysing our trade, we have three key cargo categories, agriculture, forestry, and the New Zealand Aluminium Smelter (NZAS). Forestry and agricultural product volumes have especially been impacted by market conditions, wars in the Middle East/Ukraine, and supply chain disruption at both the Suez and Panama Canals.

Total cargo activity was 1,488,000 tonnes compared with 1,732,000 tonnes in the prior year's interim period. This represents a decrease in cargo flows of 244,000 tonnes or 14%. Notable decreases registered were woodchips (-72,000 t), logs (-68,000 t), alumina (-43,000 t), stock food (-39,000 t), and fertiliser (-37,000 t), in comparison to the prior half-year.

While the outlook for the next 12 months is similarly subdued, there are reasons to be cautiously optimistic about the future. Positive negotiations appear to be ongoing over the future of NZAS, Fonterra has upgraded its dairy payout forecast, and the Government has announced a fast-track consenting process which may assist aquaculture developments in the south.

The full interim result release can be read at: www.bit.ly/SPNZ24-IntRep

The Kia Whakaū project to dredge and remove seabed materials to 9.7m chart datum (10.7m at high tide) in the harbour entrance channel was successfully completed and celebrated, with a formal opening on 30 October 2023. The Company is taking a staged approach to the new draft by declaring an interim operating draft of 10.3m at high tide, which was formally announced on 29 January, 2024. This approach is to assess the handling of deeper draft vessels before moving to the full 10.7m.

Readers will note the reference in this Portsider to the "MSC Eleni," the largest container vessel to call at Bluff. It is pleasing to see this development and combined with the increased draft opportunity we will now be able to load more volume on these vessels for export.

Finally, it is great to see Geoff Finnerty, Port General Manager, bring up his 20 years' service for South Port - 28 years 'all up' taking into account an initial stint back in the 1980s. Geoff has been an integral part of the leadership team in recent times and has vast experience in all aspects of the Port operation - more details contained in this issue.

Ngā mihi nui,
Nigel Gear



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▶ CORRECTION

In our November 2023 issue, an article on the passing of Captain John Henderson suggested that he was responsible for introducing 'The Bluff Portsider.' The publication was first introduced by Brent Proctor in September 1981, who was instrumental in creating it; John was, however, responsible for editing it, not too long after its conception.

COVER: All the cruise ships that visited Bluff this cruise season could be described as luxury at sea – this one is the "Silver Muse" outward bound on 26 January 2024.

IMAGE CREDIT: Chris Howell

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▶ OUR PEOPLE

WELCOME

Ronan Ferguson - IT Support Engineer

Flinders Browning-Davies - Shipping & Mooring Services

Sam Moore - Marine Operations Manager

TRANSFERS

Georgie Sunshine - Coordinator - Shipping & Mooring Services

Jayleel Fa'amoe Ioane - Coordinator - Shipping & Mooring Services

▶ STAFF PROFILE

Dr Tremain Mako

Congratulations to Dr Tremain Mako (Tre), who formerly worked in the cold stores, however more recently graduated from the University of Otago with a Bachelor's degree in Medicine and Surgery.

South Port is pleased to have been able to contribute in some small way to Tremain's studies and career to date, through our Community Scholarship.

Tre has cherished memories of growing up in Bluff. The small township, with its close-knit community, offered the perfect backdrop for his childhood. The afternoons were filled with laughter, creating lasting bonds with friends – swimming and diving, building huts up in the hills, and playing at the skatepark which became a second home for them.

Culture plays an important role in Tre's life, on many occasions mentoring Māori students in High School and while he was at University (peer mentoring and ka Rikarika a Tāne).

His decision to pursue medicine was profoundly influenced by his grandmother, a pivotal figure in his life. "My grandmother's battle with cancer and subsequent passing in 2016 served as a transformative moment that steered me towards a career in medicine" he said. After witnessing the disparities in health services and outcomes within the country, his goal is to address these disparities and work towards creating positive changes in the healthcare system to benefit the Māori community. "In time, I hope to contribute to improving health outcomes for Māori in New Zealand" he said.

Tre is no stranger to hard work. During his time at Southland Boys' High School, he was a Prefect, Deputy Head Boy, Deputy House Captain and Peer Tutor/Mentor. Outside of school, he was involved in a wide range of

sports including rugby, basketball, sailing, volleyball, boxing, and athletics. All of that was great groundwork for where he is today.

Through his studies, Tre found the constant pressure of heavy workload and study requirements challenging at times. In his line of work, it's easy to feel overwhelmed, so staying grounded and maintaining perspective is crucial. He prioritises holistic well-being – physical, mental, social and spiritual health – and strives to maintain a healthy and balanced lifestyle outside of work through exercise and diet, keeping up personal interests and hobbies, and spending quality time with friends and family.

He also cites many highlights being involved in and providing support in life-changing situations – births, mental health, surgical and rural medicine. "The privilege of being exposed to a diverse range of situations in people's everyday lives, the ability to positively impact and provide support has been particularly rewarding."

As well as being a South Port Community Scholarship recipient, Tre also has lasting memories of his holiday job in the cold stores, working alongside locals he'd known since childhood. It was physically demanding work, but it helped support his university studies.

Tre's words of wisdom or inspiration to share with this year's community scholarship recipient?

"Best wishes as you embark on your journey. Stay open-minded, work diligently, and take pride in your accomplishments. Meeting others' expectations can be challenging given our unique paths, so prioritise meeting your own standards. Embrace life, pursue what brings you joy, and engage in something meaningful that you aspire to contribute to. Good luck, and may you find fulfilment in your endeavours."

"Nothing good comes easy, the best things take work!"

Dr Tremain Mako at his graduation, Otago University, 2024



► 50 YEARS' EXPERIENCE COMBINED

In March 2024, South Port's Chief Executive, Nigel Gear, clocks up 30 years at the Company, and Port General Manager, Geoff Finnerty, clocks up 28 years at the Company over two periods, respectively. The Portsider Editor had the pleasure of chatting with the two at the helm, and their observations throughout their respective journeys.

Nigel Gear, Chief Executive (CEO), first started with South Port back in 1994. After a two-year stint travelling offshore, Nigel's intention was initially to move to Christchurch and take up a role with Mobil Oil. However, after being shoulder-tapped by to-be CEO Garth Cowie, and another future CEO, Mark O'Connor, Nigel decided to stay in Southland and began working at South Port as the Company Accountant, taking over from Bill Christian.

Nigel was fortunate that he was offered several different roles over the years, MDF Supervisor, Warehouse Manager, Cargo & Warehouse Manager and finally Commercial Manager, which kept his interests alive. In October 2017, he was successfully appointed as the CEO, taking over from Mark O'Connor, who had held the position for 17 years.

Throughout his thirty years at the Port, one of the most significant changes has been in the technology. Nigel can recall when the only form of computer in the early days was a single main-frame processor, a Unisys convergent technologies operating system or CTOS. Budgeting and calculations were carried out in pencil on A3 paper spreadsheets which often became messy and illegible when you reached the bottom of the significantly sized pages.

The Island Harbour has also changed materially. Containerisation has become the norm for high value cargoes and the Company has had to develop to meet these requirements. Bulk cargo volumes have also increased significantly and the land requirements to service these cargoes have therefore grown to the extent that there is very little available space on the Island Harbour now.

"Being employed on a port is never boring. You get to learn about all of the import and export businesses in the region, meet the people and work together to improve opportunities to ship volumes through the Port" Nigel said. Given Nigel's original intention was to stay with the Company for only around five years, we're pleased to have him on board, full steam ahead, thirty years later.

Geoff Finnerty, South Port's General Manager, has had not one, but two stints with the Company, giving him a combined 28-year total – 20 years in this second stint.

As a born and bred Bluffie, in 1983, having just graduated from high school, it was natural for him to seek employment at what was formerly known as the Southland Harbour Board. Geoff worked in various roles around the Port, including in the watch house, operating the forklifts, in marine, and as an operations clerk. He recalled the "lots of good times" to the Portsider Editor, and described the 'old days' as a time when the Port operated old-school 'meat loaders.' "I'm unsure how many staff would remember these in operation anymore."

After his departure in 1990, Geoff thought his time at the Port was done; however, fate had other plans, but not before he studied and became a qualified Accountant through both Polytech and University. After graduating, he travelled around New Zealand, working as an Accountant at companies such as Goodman Fielder and Fonterra, in regions including Canterbury, Auckland, and Bay of Plenty.

Geoff returned to the Company in 2003 – naturally, as an Accountant. In 2007, however, he moved into the operational side of the business, taking on the role of Port Operations Manager. This saw Geoff leading the team of people who coordinated and set up the Open Country Dairy Warehousing and the implementation of the container operations. "It was exciting to be a part of a growing business; significant challenges were involved, but it was stimulating. There were large infrastructure projects, recruitment, and the sustainability of resources to consider" Geoff said when reflecting on the change and growth he has experienced here.

Upon Nigel being appointed CEO in 2017, it opened an opportunity for Geoff, who was successfully appointed Port General Manager. It was "perfect timing," he explained, as the business was finally growing at a rate that could be adapted to. Previous growth had been strained, as resources were stretched and the Company had somewhat struggled to keep up, but "this was the right time for such a change."

"It's safe to say, I've worked in almost every area of the Port really, and I'm pretty proud of what we've achieved during this time" he said. "I never expected to return to the Port, but here I am; I am truly looking forward to what the future brings."



SPNZ's Management Team in 2006: Nigel Gear, Steve Kellett, Mark O'Connor, Geoff Finnerty and Russell Slaughter

▶ 2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Si Tarrant, right, with Philip Cory-Wright, South Port Board Chair



We would like to congratulate this year's successful scholarship recipients:

COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP: Sian Tarrant

Local Bluff resident Sian Tarrant (nee Topi) is married with two children and previously had a leadership role at South Port where her passion for people and supportive environment for professional development led her to the decision to study psychology.

Sian was born and raised in Bluff and her tūpuna whakapapa to Rakiura (Stewart Island), Ruapuke Island and Motupōhue (Bluff) on her father's side and Ngāti Mutanga o Wharekauri (Chatham Islands) on her mother's side. Sian will be the first of her line to complete a bachelor's degree.

This year is Sian's final year of study for a Bachelor of Applied Science majoring in Psychology and next year she will go on to complete her Honours degree. Her long term goal is to obtain a Master's degree and then a postgraduate diploma to gain the accreditation required to become a registered psychologist. Sian is yet to decide what she will specialise in for registration; however,

she is committed to making a real difference and enhancing the health and wellness of people.

Recently Sian was given the opportunity to work at Southland Help Rape and Abuse Support Centre where she provides court support, micro-counselling and social services support to survivors of sexual harm. Sian feels very privileged to share and hold space for people who have had a traumatic experience and walk alongside them on their healing journey.

STAFF SCHOLARSHIP: Ryder Mikkelsen

Ryder is the son of Hayden Mikkelsen, South Port's Container Manager and he will be commencing his academic journey with the University of Canterbury to study a Bachelor of Engineering.

Ryder has excelled academically as well as in the sporting and cultural domain during his time at James Hargest College and held the role of Deputy Head Boy last year, which enabled him to develop leadership skills that will be invaluable for his future endeavours. Ryder was awarded the 2023 Youthmark Young Achiever Award, which recognises Year 13 students from all Southland secondary schools who have excelled in their chosen field.

At the beginning of 2023 Ryder was awarded a scholarship to attend the Rotary Science and Technology Forum in Auckland and felt privileged to have the opportunity to learn from leaders in their fields. This experience enhanced Ryder's interest in engineering and the endless possibilities for innovation and development that come with it. Ryder was invited back by the Rotary Science and Technology Forum this year in the capacity of an advisor. As an advisor, Ryder was responsible for 28 students, which involved overseeing the smooth running of the group, ensuring all the students attended workshops, lectures, day trips, organising entertainment and managing the guidance and general wellbeing of every student.

We wish Ryder all the best in his exciting journey ahead and look forward to his progress.

Ryder Mikkelsen, right, with John Schol, South Port Board Member



BLUFF FOR CRUISE SHIPS



The "Silver Whisper" sailing from Bluff



A stern view of the "Coral Geographer" showing the hoistable platform and sight-seeing boats



About to drop her Bluff pilot, the "Star Breeze" is off on her next cruise



Adventure awaits those
Adventurer" as she

In 2021 there were knowledgeable pundits proclaiming that coronavirus would kill the cruise ship industry. Well, not in Bluff it hasn't. Somewhere, there must be tables of statistics proving that more people passed through Bluff aboard the record 19 cruise ships that visited us during the 2023-24 season than have ever done so before, and what cruise ships they are, all belonging to the luxury market. Perhaps the cruising upper crust has realised that the most scenic province in New Zealand is Southland, including as it does both Fiordland and Stewart Island, and Bluff as its port of access.

An interesting visitor this season was the "Star Breeze," which is now owned by Windstar Cruises; it was built as one of a trio that were the original 'Yachts of Seabourn,' the first three ships completed for Seabourn Cruises. The "Star Breeze" was built as the "Seabourn Spirit," the second ship to enter service for the company, while the other two were the "Seabourn Legend" and the "Seabourn Pride." All three visited New Zealand in their Seabourn days.

Making her first visit to New Zealand in the current cruise season is the Australian ship "Coral Geographer," operated by Coral

OCUS ON: PS IN BLUFF



Boarding the "Heritage Adventurer" as she departs her berth



Awaiting her returning guests, "Silver Whisper" berthed at Bluff



"Regatta" coming astern out of her berth, passes the "Heritage Adventurer" awaiting her turn



Departing at dusk, the "Silver Muse" outward bound

Expeditions. While the "Coral Geographer" is making her first cruise on this side of the Tasman, it is far from the first by Coral Expeditions as the company's "Oceanic Discoverer," later renamed "Coral Discoverer," has been a regular visitor for many years. An ingenious concept aboard both the company's ships that have been here is a shallow draught, barge-like sight-seeing vessel carried on a hoistable platform across the ship's stern. Passengers can embark and disembark directly from a deck that is well clear of the water, thus avoiding the dangers inherent in attempting to board a boat bobbing about in choppy waters.

New Zealand's own Heritage Expeditions' ice-strengthened cruise ship "Heritage Adventurer" was the most frequent caller during this cruise season, being based in Bluff for her summer voyages visiting Fiordland, Stewart Island, the sub-Antarctic Islands, Antarctica itself, and sometimes the Chatham Islands. Purpose-built for polar regions, she was formerly the "Hanseatic" and first visited New Zealand when operating for Hapag-Lloyd, a leading German company whose cruise ships have been a familiar sight in Bluff for many years.

► MAYALL CUP GOLF TOURNAMENT

This year's Mayall Cup was held in excellent playing conditions at Queens Park in Invercargill, during February.

Defending champions and raging hot favourites Jono Daintith and Jakson Williams, representing South Port, were back to defend their title and had a real swagger in their step as they walked to the first tee. Unfortunately, all the hype and expectation around their performance got the better of them as they missed a couple of crucial fairways.

Previous winner and steady golfer Peter Fairbairn and his partner, Shane Gough, representing New Zealand Aluminium Smelter (NZAS), didn't break any records, but what they did was hit most of the greens in regulation, posting an impressive total for the 13-hole tournament, winning by a margin of 3 shots.

When the Portsider spoke to winning team captain Peter Fairbairn shortly after accepting the trophy, he advised, "this is a prestigious trophy and I'm very proud to have my name on the Mayall Cup again; I've been playing in this tournament since the early '90s, and this is the third time I've won it. I'm looking forward to (hopefully) defending the trophy in 2025."

Other prize winners were:

Second place: Jono Daintith and Jakson Williams (South Port)

Third place: Jeoffrey de Reuck and Tony Samson (Southland Forklift Hire)

Closest to the pin: Murray Hewitt (Ballance Agri-Nutrients)

Longest Drive: Richie Sutherland (International Specialty Aggregates) and Wendy Fairweather (Queens Park GC)



Shane Gough and Peter Fairbairn, after winning the prestigious cup

► SPIRITS HIGH AFTER ANNUAL VISIT

On Saturday, 27 January, over 800 people made their way to Bluff to visit the Spirit of New Zealand, as it descended upon the town. Celebrating 50 years since its first voyage, the vessel was visiting Bluff as part of its nationwide tour. Visitors were treated to a look into the galley, bunk rooms, cabins, and the inner workings.

Visitors queue to step aboard the "Spirit of New Zealand" in Bluff



PHOTO: Tammi Topi, South Drone NZ

▶ A RACE TO THE TOP



Rob Goodman competing in the Bluff Hill Climb

Following the success of the 2005 movie about Southland icon Burt Munro's inspirational life - "The World's Fastest Indian," the Southland Motorcycle Club created the Burt Munro Challenge to honour Burt, his ingenuity, determination, and love of speed and motorcycles.

The inaugural event was held in 2006, and has since forged a name for itself as one of New Zealand's major motorsport events. In February 2024, Rob Goodman, Crane Operator, competed in his tenth Burt Munro challenge, his addiction to the event having ignited back in 2011.

This year, Rob competed in both the Bluff Hill Climb and Otatara Beach Race; he knocked two seconds off his personal best in the Bluff Hill Climb, seeing him getting his time down to a fast 50 seconds.

Unfortunately, his bike blew up mid-race on the beach, however it certainly won't stop him from forward-planning for 2025.

Well done, Rob!

▶ RECORDS COME TUMBLING DOWN

The arrival of the container ship "MSC Eleni" at Bluff on the 7th of February shattered a number of records at the Port. Gross tonnage is a convenient starting point and with the "MSC Eleni" measuring 54,881 tonnes she is some 6,500 tonnes bigger than any other ship of any type that has called here. Her cargo capacity is 5,059 TEU – 20 foot equivalent units for the uninitiated – 100 more than any other container ship and moving Bluff into the post-5,000 TEU era. Her overall length of 294 metres is 26 metres more than the nearest contender.



The "MSC Eleni" approaching her berth at Bluff

▶ AN “ESPRESSO MARTINI” TO GO

When the Portsider Editor heard about a yachtsman arriving in Bluff who had been floating adrift while attempting a solo sail around the world, not to mention had also been attacked by orcas, she wasn't going to pass up the opportunity to meet him.

Pavlin Nadvorni is a friendly, adventurous Bulgarian passionate about all things yachting. Having fallen in love with the sea and sailing at the tender age of eight, Pavlin's life has revolved around the water, and in the 47 years since the passion was ignited, he has sailed well over 200,000 nautical miles. “Circumnavigation (of the globe) was on my bucket list, and when the Global Solo Challenge (GSC) was first announced, I jumped in, being the seventh entry. The GSC 23/24 is the first time this event has been organised” Pavlin explained.

Pavlin's weapon of choice for completing the GSC is fondly named the “Espresso Martini,” a boat he was introduced to via eBay in 2018. Even though he already had three boats, the thought of salvaging a boat stranded on rocks after storm ‘Emma’ had devastated the United Kingdom, compelled him to jump into action. Miraculously, the boat had escaped significant damage, and, with a combined team effort, he sailed it back to Bulgaria. The rest is history.

The GSC is expected to last around 146 days, with participants setting sail from 26 August 2023. Pavlin set off on 21 October 2023; unfortunately, he encountered some difficulty from the onset.

While en route to the start line, travelling down the coast of Portugal, his boat was attacked by a pod of orcas, who successfully destroyed 1/3 of the rudder. After quite a battle to keep on course and ride out the persistent orcas, he was able to have the damage repaired and set sail.

Fast forward 88 days, and two further incidents saw him moored in Bluff for a little over a week. The rigging on the main sail was damaged, which needed to be repaired, but that was not the last of the bad luck.

Pavlin said he “reached the very north-eastern tip of Stewart Island on 16 January; issues arose upon trying to anchor, with the rope wrapping around the keel, and the vessel was drifting. I had to dive down and free it. Long story short, I had the same problem the following day; without an engine, my only option this time was to cut the line free, sail near the Bluff Harbour entrance, and ask for a tow.”

He was ever so grateful for the assistance received while anchored off Stewart Island from his friend Murray Lord - a fellow Kiwi he met while working on super yachts 30 years ago. “Suddenly, a small inflatable was coming to me from Stewart Island to help, and as fate would have it, we were randomly reunited” he said. “I couldn't believe it!”

He has appreciated the considerable support received from people on both islands, particularly Customs, Immigration, MPI, and South Port Management.

At the time of writing, Pavlin was still sitting 9th out of 20 on the GSC leaderboard.

To learn more about the race or competitors, or to GPS track, visit: www.globalsolochallenge.com



The “Espresso Martini” at South Port on 21 January, 2024

► THE NORTHERN STEAMSHIP COMPANY LTD



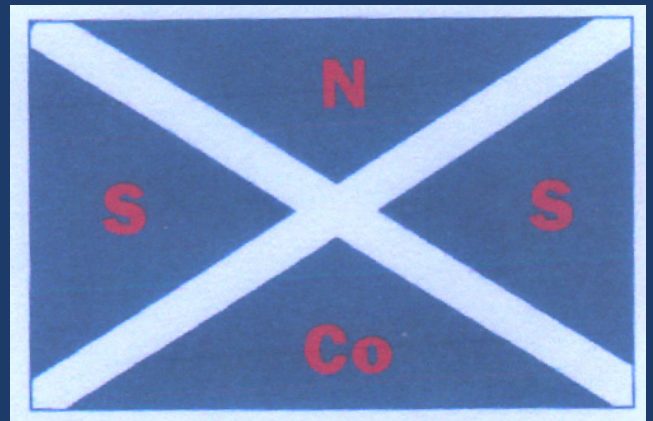
The smartly kept "Maunganui" inbound on one of her many visits to Bluff

As long ago as our May 1993 issue of The Bluff Portsider we featured the Northern Steamship Company in one of the first 'A Flag from The Past' articles. As it is all but thirty years since this appeared perhaps, we can be forgiven for repeating ourselves, especially given the company's association with Hooker Shipping and thus with MOVE Logistics (see our back page for details).

The company was founded in Auckland on 11 May 1881 by Captain McGregor, master, and part owner of the steamer "Rowena," his associates, and many of Auckland's business leaders. Five steamers in which the

principals had an interest – the "Argyle," "Iona," "McGregor," "Rowena," and "Staffa," formed the initial fleet of what they named the Northern Steamship Company. With so many Scots among the principals, it was no surprise that the Saint Andrew's cross of Scotland was chosen as the house-flag, with the red letters N S S Co in the quarters. As far as its trading pattern went, the name said it all. Auckland was the home port for its small steamers, most of which carried passengers as well as cargo, travelling north as far as Parengarenga and east to the Bay of Plenty. On the exposed west coast, ships based in Onehunga operated a liner service to New Plymouth, where Hooker Shipping looked after their interests, and sometimes round to Wanganui, as it was called then. They were smart little ships, having green hulls with red boot-topping and a yellow band, the funnel being white with a black top. White with a black top was a popular way to paint the funnel in those days as the boilers relied on natural draught so the funnels were, of necessity, rather tall and the white section would not show the salt crystals that were deposited when spray struck the hot funnel casing nor the black top the soot smuts that landed thereon.

From Opotiki in the Bay of Plenty to Parengarenga near North Cape, and down the west coast to New Plymouth and Wanganui, Northern Company ships called in every bay; they ventured far up every river and creek, and stopped at every inhabited rock, doing more to develop trade in the far north than any other company. The 'ports' were small and the ships smaller. Some were so small, in fact, that when rivers were in flood, they could take a short cut across the fields and navigation might rely as much on the barking of a dog as anything the chart indicated.



As northern road and rail links improved, passengers transferred their allegiance to shore transport, but freight was still transported by sea; although, the tiny ports up shallow creeks were no more, and trans-field navigation most certainly frowned upon. This allowed the company to build larger ships, which is perhaps why the 'nui' suffix was adopted, beginning with the "Ranginui" of 1936. Post-war, the company expanded its routes and began venturing to South Island ports, eventually extending as far as Bluff where Northern Company ships often loaded grain.

During the 1960s they also traded into Deep Cove at the head of Doubtful Sound, with construction materials for the Manapouri power scheme. The last cargo ever carried by a Northern Steamship Company vessel was coal from Westport to Auckland by the "Tainui II" and she completed discharging on 13 November 1974. Laid up thereafter she was sold in 1976. The company continued as shipping agents until 1985 when it ceased trading. The Head Office, built in 1898, remains however, and the Northern Steamship Company is now a popular bistro and bar on Auckland's Quay Street.

When the “Atlas Wind” arrived at Bluff in January 2023, it revived the tradition of a New Zealand company operating a dedicated trans-Tasman shipping service through Bluff that dated back to the early days of the Union Steam Ship Company. It was a service that had been absent from Bluff so far this century. The company behind its revival is MOVE Logistics, one of the biggest transport and warehousing companies in New Zealand, and one that also operates extensively in Australia. It might also be said, with some justification, to have salt water flowing in its veins.



Carrying the MOVE Ocean's logo on her superstructure the “Atlas Wind” seen inbound for Bluff

Observers of the New Zealand trucking scene may have noticed that MOVE Logistics vehicles often carry the statement ‘Taking care of business since 1869.’ This refers to the purchase in 1869 by John Hooker of a bullock and cart which he used to transport stone and conduct furniture removals around New Plymouth, officially establishing the firm ‘Hookers’ in 1871, which became Hooker Brothers after John’s four sons joined the company in 1916. As for the salt water, this came along in 1883 when Hooker was appointed as agent for the Northern Steamship Company.

Founded in Auckland two years earlier this company had a network of services on the east coast from North Cape to the Bay of Plenty and on the west coast operated a service from Onehunga to New Plymouth, where Hooker Shipping looked after their interests. The last Northern

Company ship in service was the “Tainui II” which left our shores on 24 May 1976. By the time the “Tainui II” departed, Hooker was a major transport company and in 1983 its name was changed to the more encompassing Hooker Pacific. Following a management buyout in 1989, it began acquiring other transport and warehouse companies, some of which were virtually house-hold names in New Zealand. In 2014 operations were consolidated under the new name of TIL Logistics, among the biggest freighting companies in the country and in capacity the largest provider of warehousing. An almost prophetic purchase in 2017 was that of MOVE Logistics as four years later the company underwent a major rebranding and emerged as the MOVE Logistics Group in 2021.

MOVE Oceans is a new division within the Group formed in 2022 to oversee the

operation of two new maritime ventures, one coastal and one trans-Tasman. The coastal venture envisaged a roll-on, roll-off vessel fitted with a quarter ramp so that she could work to and from conventional wharves rather than requiring a link-span like the Cook Strait ferries use. It was to be a joint venture between MOVE Logistics and the NZ Transport Agency/ Waka Kotahi and operate between New Plymouth and Nelson. A vessel was ordered from a Vietnamese shipyard which was responsible for the design and construction. However, there was a snag. Because of the ramp design the ship would only be able to work cargo for 45 minutes either side of high water and, as MOVE Chief Executive Craig Evans said; “you can’t run a regular inter-island service based on that.” The order for the new ship was cancelled.

The trans-Tasman service operated by the “Atlas Wind”, however, has proved more stable. Acquired in Europe, and flying the Vanuatu flag the “Atlas Wind” is a multi-purpose cargo ship having a container capacity of 350 TEU with 2 x 40 tonne cranes making her independent of shore facilities. A monthly rotation is operated visiting the New Zealand ports of Bluff, Dunedin, Timaru, Nelson and New Plymouth while across the Tasman East coast ports as far north as Brisbane, Tasmanian ports and Melbourne are called at, plus others as inducement offers. Hooker Pacific remains an important part of MOVE Logistics and Hooker Shipping offers agency facilities in every New Zealand port at which commercial ships might call. Naturally, Hooker Shipping also provides agency services to the “Atlas Wind” when she is in New Zealand ports including, of course, New Plymouth where John Hooker began it all over one hundred and fifty years ago.



While the “Atlas Wind” was undergoing maintenance the “Skyline” was chartered to replace her