

The Bluff

# portsider



# SOUTH PORT'S PEOPLE – Gareth Carson: Health & Safety Officer



The waterfront can be a dangerous environment. Heavy machinery is everywhere, often carrying loads that obstruct the driver's view, trucks and trains abound bringing cargo to and fro and, more or less by definition, water awaits the unwary. Determined to minimise the inherent dangers associated with its business South Port appointed Gareth Carson to the role of health and safety officer in 2009.

Gareth grew up in Balfour where his parents owned a transport business and a small farm. Not surprisingly Gareth's first work experience involved farming and truck driving before he enrolled at Otago University where he spent five years studying commerce. After completing his university studies Gareth and his wife Andrea settled in Invercargill where he joined the

marketing team at Craignipe Timber. As Craignipe trades internationally his role there involved considerable international travel giving Gareth the opportunity to experience many different countries and cultures.

After twelve years with Craignipe Gareth began specialising in the health and safety aspects of the work environment culminating in his appointment to the South Port Team. While health and safety in the workplace is everybody's responsibility having an officer specifically concerned with this aspect of the working environment has paid dividends for South Port in improving working practices and reducing workplace injuries with a consequent improvement in productivity.

In his leisure time Gareth enjoys the typically Southland pursuits of duck-shooting and fishing, along with golf and, when finances permit, his Mustang car.

Left: Gareth Carson setting an example with a high visibility jacket even when only confronting a computer.

## NUMBER 16

For the third successive year South Port has contributed to the endeavours of the Southland Stags, the province's representative rugby team, and once again it is jersey number 16 that the company has sponsored.

Representatives from the Southland Stags visited recently to present South Port with their 'No. 16' sponsored jersey, team members Keanu Kahukura and Marty McKenzie doing the honours this year. Guests at the annual Southland Stags customer function have the opportunity to win this jersey, the most recent recipient being Colin McDonald of New Zealand Aluminium Smelters.



Keanu Kahukura and Marty McKenzie present the 16 jersey to Mark O'Connor and Nigel Gear.

## PILOTS SHIFT SHIP

Pilots bring ships in, take ships out and shift ships around the harbour, but in this case the pilots themselves are shifting ship and end for ending offices in the administration building. The end for ending in this case involves the whole marine department shifting half a cable or so to the eastward from the west end of the building to the east.

Those seeking marine assistance may take all way off their vehicles in the adjacent roadstead then shape a course for the east end door. If unsure of east and west the pilots will no doubt set your bearings straight.

Once clearance to enter has been

granted those in need of assistance may proceed within where a number of berths are available with that of Marine Administrator Murray Kelman immediately to starboard of the entrance and the lines staff in the next berth to starboard. Finding the pilots takes a little more navigational expertise with a couple of major alterations to port being needed to enter the pilots' haven. Those whose nautical skills are defeated by the manoeuvring required should signal for a pilot in the usual manner, either by displaying 'G' flag of the International Code of Signals, making the sound signal 'G' on whistle or siren, showing a blue light or shouting "Help!"

**COVER:** Exports of forest products increased considerably during the past year, largely driven by renewed interest from Chinese importers. This has required additional areas to be designated for log storage to ensure rapid delivery to shipside and minimise time in port. Here export logs destined for China are lifted aboard ship.



**South Port NZ**

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## TOP OF THE LINE

At the 2013 Global Freight Awards held in London on 20 November the Mediterranean Shipping Company was named 'Container Line of the Year'. In receiving the award the Managing Director of MSC in the United Kingdom commented that it was testament to the worldwide network of professional MSC agents without whom it would not have been possible. Most distant of these agents from MSC's Geneva headquarters is its Bluff representative Steve Kellett and his team, for it is, of course, MSC that operates the Capricorn Service linking Bluff to global destinations.



Newly introduced to the Capricorn Service is the "MSC Astrid", seen outbound after her first visit to Bluff.



## REACHING OUT

To enhance throughput and efficiency in the Bluff Container Terminal a second Reachstacker has been added to the fleet of container handling equipment operated by South Port. The addition of the Omega Reachstacker represents another major investment by South Port in container operations at the port with the container fleet now comprising two Reachstackers and five top-lifters. They help ensure the rapid turn-around of visiting container ships and will assist MSC to maintain its reputation for punctuality and reliability that lead to its customers voting it 'Container Line of the Year'.

The Reachstackers give greater versatility to South Port's container handling fleet.

## CARGO THROUGHPUT

Cargo figures for the past year were slightly down on 2012, which was a record year, although the number of ship calls was slightly up at 336. Over half of the cargo tonnage reduction was attributable to reduced activity at the New Zealand Aluminium Smelters plant while much of the rest was due to a good growing season in Southland that saw less stockfood being required.

On the other hand significant increases were experienced in fertiliser imports and log exports. Fertiliser was up over 13% to 387,000 tonnes and log exports rose nearly 25% to 246,000 tonnes.



Fertiliser imports increased substantially during the past year.

# BLUFF FOR The South Year



End of an icon, the meat loaders worked their last when the "Haru Verdy" loaded in July 1996.



Number 4 cargo shed in the process of becoming a container terminal.



Bagged milk powder arrives for export.



South Port's main place of business.

The 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1988 will be remembered through history for the one momentous event that defined it, namely that upon this date South Port New Zealand Limited took over the assets, liabilities and commercial activities of the Southland Harbour Board. Those of mathematical bent will have already realised that the company recently completed a quarter century of service. It has been an eventful quarter century for the port that saw the demise of the once mighty Union Steam Ship Company, the end of frozen meat exports by conventional refrigerated ships, the almost complete disappearance of traditional break-bulk cargo handling and the end of dedicated trans-Tasman services. On the other side of the ledger perhaps the most significant developments have been the almost complete domination of the former break-bulk trades by the shipping container and the introduction of a weekly container service by the now mighty Mediterranean Shipping Company through Bluff to world-wide destinations, the huge increase in forest product exports and the rise in dairy exports other than the traditional butter and cheese. New imports have included sulphuric acid for superphosphate production, cement,

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Business, Island Harbour, Bluff.

animal feed stock, including molasses in bulk, and regular shipments of caustic soda and nitric acid to Stolthaven Terminals in Bluff. The former number 4 cargo shed and several adjacent buildings were demolished to eventually make way for the Bluff Container Terminal while new dry cargo and bulk storage facilities were constructed for the use of port customers. South Port's refrigerated storage capacity was also greatly increased by the purchase of the Southland Cool Stores facility as detailed in last January's 'Portsider'. Looking to future expansion a vacant area of land adjacent to the Invercargill rail yards has also been acquired.

Port operations have been enhanced by new cargo handling facilities, most notably a succession of increasingly capable Liebherr mobile cranes, a new pilot boat and the replacement of the 14 tonne bollard pull tug "Hauroko" by the 35 tonne bollard pull tug "Hauroko" to ensure the safety of the ever-larger ships visiting the port. And through it all 'The Bluff Portsider' has gone from strength to strength.

To commemorate a quarter-century of success invited guests joined South Port staff at a combined twenty-fifth birthday celebration and end-of-year function.



The mobile container crane probes acquisitively into the depths of a visiting ship.



When she entered service in Bluff the "Hauroko" was the most powerful tug in the South Island.



Special delivery - Bluff's new pilot vessel "Takitimu II" arrives on 15 June 2006.

## THE GATEWAY TO ANTARCTICA

As one of the world's most southerly ports located in the midst of the 'Roaring Forties' Bluff can occasionally suffer from spells of inclement weather but it is also ideally situated for those heading to the Southern Ocean and beyond. Most of these are fishing vessels reaping their harvest in those bountiful waters but each southern summer will also include a number of smaller 'adventure' type cruise ships that sail south from Bluff to Antarctica and the islands between. This year saw several cruises by the "Professor Khromov" and a somewhat protracted one by her sister "Akademik Shokalskiy".



"Professor Khromov" departing Bluff for Antarctica.



Jarrod Thomson & Tuaine Papatua with the new forklifts recently purchased for the Foreshore Road Coldstores.

## NEW EQUIPMENT

In addition to the new Reachstacker mentioned on page 3 South Port has continued with equipment renewal in other areas of its operations. This has included two new forklifts at the Foreshore Cold Store where their advanced technology has resulted in improved efficiency and enhanced operator safety and comfort. Also joining the South Port stable is a new shunting tractor which replaces a fifty year old veteran that now moves into a well-deserved retirement – although somewhat short of Gold Card territory yet.

## THE MAIDEN OF MILFORD

A distinctive new face, not to mention figure, has joined the fleet of tourist vessels operating on Milford Sound. The face and figure in question adorn either side of Jucy Cruize's new "Maiden of Milford" and will be familiar to anyone who has seen vehicles of the associated Jucy Rentals cruising our highways - the 'Maiden of Milford' indeed.

Formerly Southern Discoveries "Lady of the Sounds" her new name rather pays homage to her previous one. Both new name and decorative paintwork were received while undergoing maintenance in Bluff during September.



The "Maiden of Milford" now adorns her Sound.

## SHOWING THE FLAG

During 'Exercise Southern Katipo' the New Zealand Navy's Sealift and Amphibious Support Vessel H.M.N.Z.S. "Canterbury" made her first visit to Bluff. Able to accommodate up to 250 personnel with their vehicles and equipment "Canterbury" allows the New Zealand Defence Force to deploy military personnel, vehicles and equipment over long distances. In this role she provides the sealift capability for the amphibious task force.

She is equally at home providing disaster relief and humanitarian aid being a first responder to the Christchurch earthquake in 2011. Similar aid was provided to Samoa following the earthquake and tsunami in 2009.



H.M.N.Z.S. "Canterbury" inbound on her first visit to Bluff.



## SHOWING THE TRICOLOUR

Exercising with "Canterbury" and other New Zealand naval units was the French frigate "Prairial" and as part of her deployment she also visited Bluff, the first French warship to call here for over fifty years, the last being "Francis Garnier" in 1961.

Second of the 'Floreal Class' of light monitoring frigates "Prairial" was delivered about twenty years ago. Although intended for surveillance work "Prairial" is equipped with electronic warfare systems and is armed with Exocet MM38 missiles and a 100mm CADAM turret with Najir fire control system. She is also capable of carrying a helicopter.

"Prairial" is just the third French warship to fly the tricolour in Bluff.

## A MOUNTAIN TALE

Her gleaming paintwork reveals the "Mount Hikurangi" to be a new addition to the Pacific Basin fleet, in fact she was only a few months old when the 'Mount' came to the 'Hill', Bluff Hill that is. Famed as the first place on mainland New Zealand to see the sunrise Mount Hikurangi overlooks Gisborne which, as most will know, is in the North Island while, as everybody knows, in the true mainland of New Zealand Bluff Hill, or Motupohue, overlooks Bluff and is famed as the first place on mainland New Zealand to see the Bluff oyster.



The Mount departs The Bluff, "Mount Hikurangi" outbound.

Funnel colours of Hansa Mare.



# HANSA MARE REEDEREI

The longest ships ever to enter Bluff Harbour and the largest container ships currently trading here are a quartet of sisters owned by Hansa Mare Reederei and operating on the Capricorn Service of MSC. First of the fleet to visit Bluff was the "Mare Phoenicium" on 28 February 2013 and she has since been joined by her sisters "Mare Arcticum", "Mare Britannicum" and "Mare Caribicum", all of them measuring 40,306 gross tons with a nominal container capacity of 4,038 TEU's.

Hansa Mare was founded on 23 December 1991 as a joint venture between Harro Kniffka and Schlusel Reederei. Harro Kniffka was born in Rostock and worked for a number of well-known German shipping companies before joining with Schlusel Reederei to establish Hansa Mare. He went on to found the Hanseatic Lloyd Group in 2001, this Group becoming a substantial shipowner in its own right with the current fleet made up of container ships and product/chemical tankers. On 31 December 2000 Harro Kniffka resigned his position as one of the two Hansa Mare directors with his interest in the company continuing through the newly formed Hansatic Lloyd.

Schlusel Reederei is a much older shipowning company having been established in the Free Hanseatic City



Bathed in evening sunshine the "Mare Britannicum" approaches her berth in Bluff.

of Bremen in 1950 with its first ship, the "Ansgaritor", being purchased in 1953. Among the notable ships it has operated was the tanker "Humboldt", at 220,000 tonnes deadweight the biggest ship under the German flag when she joined the fleet in 1970. Today the company operates a fleet of seventeen container ships including the seven ship fleet of Hansa Mare.

When a new ship is built it is usually financed through a bank loan, much as we might do when buying a house, but in Germany a KG (Kommanditgesellschaft) investment system allows private and institutional investors to buy shares in new ships with the German Government granting substantial tax allowances for depreciation, which is considerable in a new vessel. Much of the German deep sea container fleet built for charter to liner companies has been financed in this way –

they are sometimes described as 'doctors and dentists' ships – with the ships managed for the investors by companies such as Hansa Mare Reederei.

Hansa Mare Reederei GmbH & Co., KG marketed its first project in 1992. This became the 1,054 TEU container ship "Mare Balticum" delivered in April 1993 and her sisters "Mare Adriaticum" and "Mare Ibericum" entered service later the same year. The company's early years proved very successful and by its fifth anniversary a fleet of twelve container ships was in service, soon to be joined by a fleet of eight identical Panamax container ships ordered from Hyundai Heavy Industries in South Korea, all to be financed through the KG investment system. These entered service between 1998 and 2000 at a time when freight rates were buoyant and very high charter rates were being obtained by container ships. The new ships were named "Mare Arcticum", 'Atlanticum', 'Britannicum', 'Caribicum', 'Lycium', 'Phoenicium', 'Siculum' and 'Supernum'. With the eight new ships in service Hansa Mare enjoyed its most successful year in 2000, the fleet now comprising twenty container ships totalling 56,873 TEU, all earning good returns allowing the company to write down debt very quickly. As a consequence of the high freight rates ship values were also at record levels and over the next few years the company sold the smaller ships on advantageous terms.

Eventually the fleet was reduced to the eight Korean built Panamax Class which have proved very reliable and successful in service, and with half the current Hansa Mare fleet operating on the MSC Capricorn Service they are regular visitors to the port of Bluff.



"Mare Phoenicium" arrives to load for world-wide destinations.