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The Bluff

portsider

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South Port Chairman, Rex Chapman (left) presents Courtney her award while Kaukiterangi accepts his award from Chief Executive, Mark O'Connor.



South Port Scholarship Recipients 2015

Staff Scholarship – Courtney Shelton

Courtney graduated from James Hargest College last year with Level 3 NCEA. Courtney is the daughter of Island Harbour Cold Store Operator, Lawrence Shelton, and is currently enrolled at the Southern Institute of Technology and is determined to gain her National Certificate in Veterinary Nursing, ultimately leading to completion of a Diploma in Veterinary Nursing.

Courtney has been an active

member of the St John Youth Division for two years as a Cadet and is aiming to become a Cadet Leader having recently completed part one of the First Responder qualification, with the aim to be a fully qualified ambulance officer by 2017.

A keen interest in biology, a desire to help and care for animals from an early age and completing a number of animal related courses has cemented Courtney's decision to become a Veterinary Nurse.

Community Scholarship – Kaukiterangi Blair

Kau graduated from Southland Boys' High School in 2013 and studied Health Science (foundation year in 2014) at University of Otago. This year Kau is enrolled in the Health Science First Year Course, the initial step towards his intended career, which is medicine.

Kau has represented Southland in both basketball and touch and these sports still play a huge part in his life today. Kau has been part of a Kapa Haka group since primary school and was made Kaea (leader) of the Southland Boys' High School Kapa Haka Group in 2012 and 2013. He was also part of an Acapella group that performed all around Southland and in 2013 auditioned in Wellington for New Zealand's Got Talent. Kau shows good leadership and maturity and was a prefect and house captain.

Ever since he was young, Kau has wanted to be a doctor and his recently found passion for science has further encouraged him to attempt such a challenging, yet rewarding career in medicine.

Article supplied by Executive Assistant, Kirsten Hoyle.

Happy Retirement – Kevin Hotton

Kevin Hotton recently signed off 3 months shy of 30 years service at the Port. Beginning his career in Bluff as a Waterman, he was responsible for general maintenance around the wharf including painting, 'handyman' work and servicing the water requirements of incoming and outgoing vessels. An opportunity to work 2 days a week as the 'temporary' Syncrolift Operator (recognising there are only 3 syncrolifts in New Zealand: Bluff, New Plymouth & Auckland) developed into a full time role and that is where he remained until his last day, 29 May. Over this time he has built up a good relationship with local fishermen and in particular tourism operator Real Journeys. Enjoy your retirement Kevin.

Kevin Hotton (left) reminiscing with Marine Administrator, Murray Kelman at his retirement farewell.



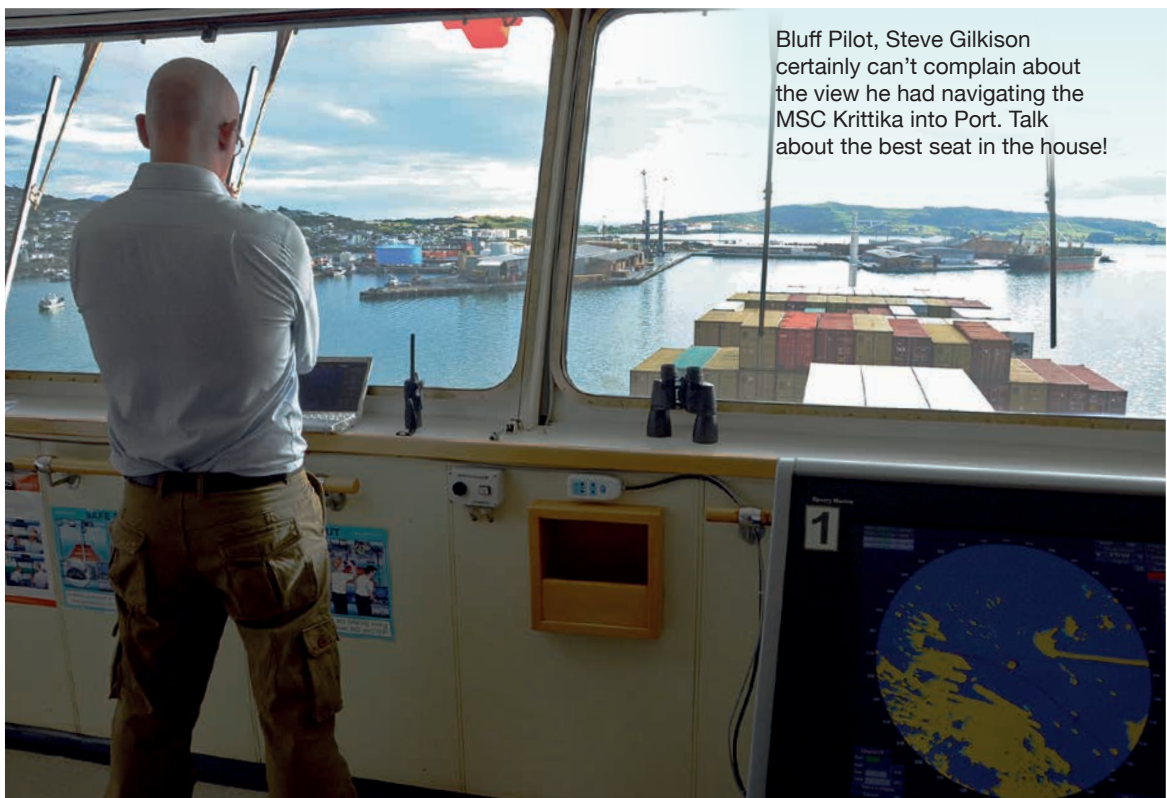
South Port NZ

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Front Cover. Not many ships get to work cargo in such scenic surroundings – the "Fagelgracht" in Deep Cove.

Changes to Portsider Publication

Readers of the Portsider have now become familiar with their January, May & September edition arriving in the mail. To align with other promotional materials the Port produces, the dates of the publication have now changed and will be produced in March, July & November.



Bluff Pilot, Steve Gillkison certainly can't complain about the view he had navigating the MSC Kritika into Port. Talk about the best seat in the house!

SOUTH PORT'S PEOPLE

BRETT McINTYRE has accepted the newly created role of Operations Maintenance Supervisor. He is familiar with the Port surroundings having worked at AB Equipment for the past fourteen years as a technician and more recently service manager (eight years) where he would visit Bluff servicing the forklift fleet. Brett enjoys the outdoors camping around New Zealand but admits the South Island is his preferred destination. He also enjoys mountain biking and is the president of the Southland Mountain Biking Club. He is married to Lisa and has two children Samantha (17) and Jamie (15). Together they also own a small digger hire business – 2 Tyre Tracks & Hire.

FRANK O'BOYLE has recently joined the senior management team taking on the Infrastructure Manager's role. Born and bred in Ireland, Frank moved to New Zealand ten years ago having completed a civil engineering degree. For the past ten years he has worked for Opus International Consultants in a variety of roles before accepting his new position in Bluff. One notable project he worked on recently was the Avon River precinct project in Christchurch which is part of the Canterbury Earthquake rebuild. Frank is married to Southlander Jenny O'Meara and they have three young children, Mickey (8), Abby (6) and Quinn (4). In his spare time he likes to follow the Irish rugby, football and cricket teams. On Saturdays he still laces up the boots and plays football for Old Boys AFC in Invercargill. He also has a keen interest in pool, golf and darts (in fact he thinks he has the ability of Michael Van Gerwin at times!)

SARAH SMITH has moved south and accepted the Finance Administrator role. For the past six and a half years she has been self-employed operating her own accounts and book-keeping business but in October last year Sarah and her husband Greg moved from Taupo to Bluff through a work opportunity that was presented to him. Sarah's 18 year old son has moved south with her and she also has a 10 year old step-daughter who visits in the school holidays. In their spare time they enjoy the outdoors, the bush, lakes and ocean. Since moving south they have spent several weekends tramping and camping in Fiordland National Park.

As well as welcoming Frank O'Boyle, Brett McIntyre and Sarah Smith, other recent appointments at South Port include: Marcel Goodman, Warren Hamlin & Ann Graves in the dairy warehousing teams, Julie Ryan in the Island Harbour Cold Store as Administrator and Lindsay 'Woody' Woodrow as the Syncrolift Operator.

Brett McIntyre inspecting one of the Port's reach stackers.



Frank O'Boyle surveying a new roading development on the Port.



Sarah Smith diligently working away in her office.



Parliamentary Visit

The Rt Hon. John Key and local National Party MP Sarah Dowie made a scheduled visit to the Port whilst visiting the region in early April. They met local Directors and Management for a presentation about the Port, then the Prime Minister addressed the wider staff and undertook a question and answer session.

(Left to right) South Port Chief Executive Mark O'Connor, Prime Minister John Key, Local MP Sarah Dowie & South Port Chairman Rex Chapman.

"L'Austral" passing the Bowen Falls at the head of Milford Sound.

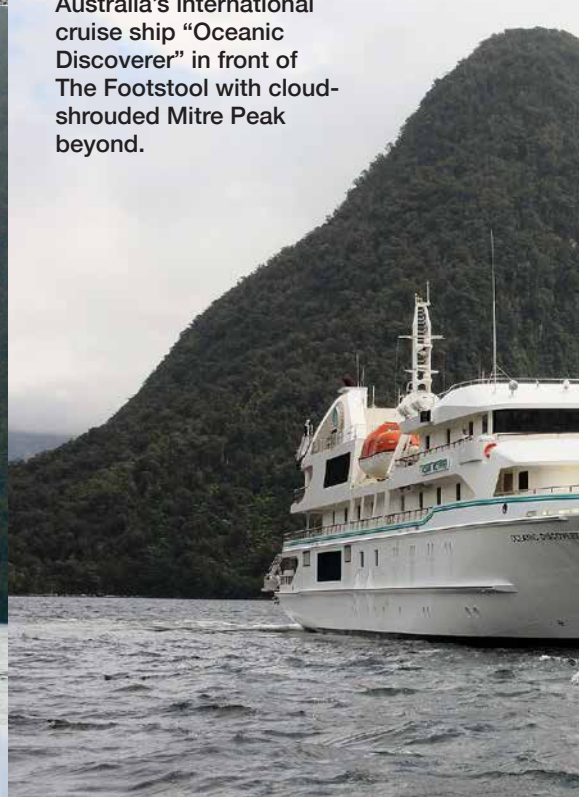
BLUFF FO Cruise



"Radiance of the Seas" on a rainy day – now there's a surprise – in Milford Sound.



Australia's international cruise ship "Oceanic Discoverer" in front of The Footstool with cloud-shrouded Mitre Peak beyond.



Zodiacs preparing to depart the "Caledonian Sky" for Astronomers Point.



Visitors to Fiordland waters during the 2014 – 2015 cruise season ranged from super-yachts, and some not so super, to mega-ships, and some not so mega. Most were familiar from previous years but one making her first visit was particularly interesting as "L'Austral" is the first French cruise ship to visit Fiordland. She was the second of four identical ships delivered to Compagnie du Ponant, which was founded in April 1988 by a group of French merchant marine officers, its first vessel being the three-masted barque "Le Ponant" delivered in 1991. As our photograph shows the "L'Austral" is a comparatively small cruise ship, but one designed to pamper her passengers in luxurious surroundings - with the added attraction of French cuisine.

Fiordland has always been a popular cruising destination for those catering to the luxury market with Seabourn and Silversea vessels regular visitors along with the Hapag-Lloyd ships from Germany, including the "Europa", consistently the highest rated cruise ship afloat, and the smaller 'adventure' type ships.

OCUS ON Ships

Princess Cruises' "Sea Princess"
departing Milford Sound
bound for Brisbane.



Luxury at sea, the "Seabourn
Odyssey" clearing Stewart Island.



The "Silver Discoverer"
inbound for Bluff.
(See also page 8).



As usual several of the 'adventure' themed cruise ships visited. Generally these spend two or three days making a leisurely transit through Fiordland allowing time to visit sites of historic interest. High on the list of places to land is Astronomer's Point in Pickersgill Harbour, which is where the intrepid adventurers in our photograph of the "Caledonian Sky" are bound. Pickersgill Harbour is where Captain James Cook moored H.M.S. "Resolution" in 1773, spending six weeks there establishing his exact latitude and longitude and charting Dusky Sound. To facilitate the work of his astronomer, William Wales, Cook had his men cut down some of the trees at Astronomers Point, the stumps of which can still be seen. Dusky Sound is also the site of New Zealand's first bird sanctuary, which was on Resolution Island, and its first known shipwreck, that of the "Endeavour" in Facile Harbour. The use of inflatable boats allows the modern tourist to visit these sites and enjoy close encounters with the local flora and fauna.



Enjoying the weather: Nigel Gear, Mark O'Connor, Tony Bond (Rayonier-Matariki), Steve Chandler (Rayonier-Matariki), Rob McGregor (Rayonier-Matariki) & Geoff Finnerty onsite for the first log export.

Health & Safety

As reported in the January edition of the Portsider, delineators have been installed to segregate general traffic from the log yard operations. In addition to this, further fencing has now been erected on Berth 8 to segregate the log activities from vehicles exiting via the syncrolift road.



New fencing on Berth 8.

IN THE COMMUNITY



Bluff Community Trust Chairman, Bob Bowen (left) accepts a donation from Chief Executive, Mark O'Connor.

The Bluff Swimming Pool is undergoing required maintenance and a significant upgrade. To date the community has raised enough funds to replace the roof, windows, walls and has inserted fire doors. Additional work that is proposed to be completed is the upgrading of the changing rooms, establishing a dedicated learning area and modifying four lanes by deepening the pool. Accordingly the community pool approached South Port to see if the Company would provide financial assistance towards their upgrade. We could see the benefits to the community by having a safer and more functional swimming pool so we were delighted to make a contribution.

As readers of the Portsider will be aware the process improvement tool (PACE) is now well embedded in the Company's day to day practices. One of the pillars (5S) is an approach to workplace organisation that creates a productive, safe and visual workplace. In simple terms this begins with a decent clean-up and removal of unused items around the workplace! A recent example of how this has benefitted the local community was when repairs and maintenance were undertaken on the Town Wharf. Normally old, unrepairable timber would be discarded, however when Bluff Engineering contacted South Port to see if they could recycle this old timber and use it to develop the new entrance sign to Bluff, the answer was yes, and doesn't the sign look great!



South Port Container Manager, Hayden Mikkelsen (left) and Bluff Engineering's Andy Watkins standing beside the new Bluff entrance sign.

TRANSFORMERS 3

The Port of Bluff and its pilots have had a long relationship with Fiordland. Back in the days of harbour boards, Fiordland was part of the pilotage district under the authority of the harbour board in Bluff and for any requiring pilotage within Fiordland, Bluff was the first port of call. During the construction of the Manapouri Power Scheme, when virtually all the heavy equipment, cement and petroleum products required were shipped in through Deep Cove, pilots from Bluff became familiar with the waters of Doubtful Sound leading to Deep Cove. Back in those days tankers were moored near the current tailrace outlet, the former trans-Tasman passenger liner “Wanganella” lay close to the present day hostel as an accommodation ship, cargo ships berthed at the wharf where the water is so deep it had to be cantilevered off the cliff face and bulk cement ships lay between the wharf and the “Wanganella”, discharging to silos ashore. Most required pilots who were provided by the Southland Harbour Board, as the port authority was then known.

Naturally, therefore, when new transformers had to be shipped in through Deep Cove it was to the traditional provider of pilotage services in Fiordland that the shippers turned. So it was that South Port's senior pilot, Bob Coote, found himself on the bridge of the Dutch cargo ship “Fagelgracht” inbound for Deep Cove in December last year, repeating the process in February aboard the “Muntgracht”. “Fagelgracht” had the first of three Australian built transformers, each weighing 131 tonnes, consigned to the Manapouri Power Station, the other two arriving aboard the “Muntgracht”. In Deep Cove the transformers were discharged to road transport for the difficult trip over the Wilmot Pass road to West Arm, Lake Manapouri.

Having dealt with Transformers 3 we now await the video game.



Discharging the 131 tonne transformer from the “Fagelgracht”.



Landed and almost ready for the tortuous trip over the Wilmot Pass.

Thorco Clairvaux at Berth 4 ready to discharge towers and blades.



FLAT HILL WIND FARM

Residents of Bluff will be watching with interest the new development 3kms west of the town where an 8 turbine wind farm is being constructed at Flat Hill. South Port was engaged to handle the towers, blades and nacelles at the Port and the operators enjoyed the challenge handling specialised cargo. The towers will be 44 metres high with a blade diameter of 52 metres. Each turbine will be capable of generating 850 kilowatts – a combined generation of 6.8 megawatts of power – enough to supply approximately 2,600 homes.

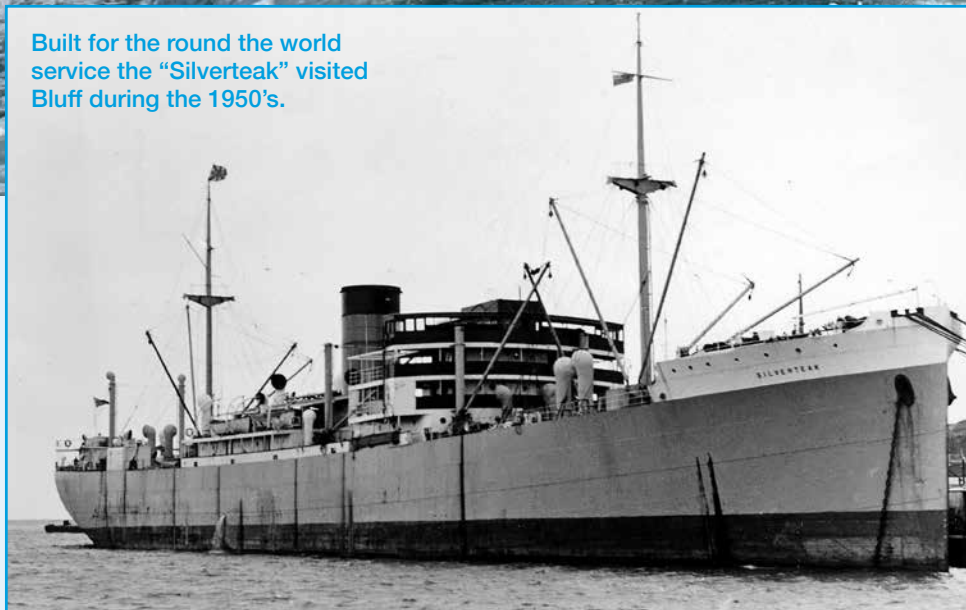
SILVER LINE TO SILVERSEA



Returning from Antarctic waters, the "Silver Discoverer" off Bluff.



Built for the round the world service the "Silverteak" visited Bluff during the 1950's.



When the adventure type cruise ship "Silver Discoverer" visited Bluff earlier this year she became the first ship in the luxury fleet of Silversea Cruises to call at our Port and stirred memories of others once well known in southern waters. The ship herself was familiar enough having called in Bluff on numerous occasions in her previous guise as the "Clipper Odyssey", her renaming following her purchase by Silversea in 2013, but the memories she evoked are of companies now almost forgotten, including a cruising predecessor and an eminent British cargo liner company.

The eminent British cargo liner company was Silver Line Limited. It was first registered on 24 November 1925, the result of a chance meeting in London between Stanley Thompson and an American, Henry Kerr, of the Kerr Steamship Company. Stanley Thompson was a member of the Sunderland family that operated the well-known ship building yard of J. L. Thompson. In 1908 Stanley went into partnership with his brother John to establish the St Helens Steam Shipping Company Limited, in London, buying their first ship in 1911 and renaming her "Silverbitch".

Henry Kerr and fellow director Alfred Klegg were seeking partners to fulfil their dream of opening a 'round the world' shipping line and at the 1923 meeting proposed to Stanley Thompson that his ships might operate on this. Stanley agreed and in view of his ships' nomenclature the name Silver Line was adopted. Expansion was very rapid in order to meet the requirements of such an ambitious service and by the end of 1930, twenty-one ships had been built for the company.

Naturally the round the world service ceased with the outbreak of World War II, during which Silver Line was to lose eleven of its fleet. Post-war six replacement ships were ordered from the Thompson family's shipyard

at Sunderland. All were fast, high class cargo liners but only two would enter Silver Line service and then only briefly as the company moved from liner services to tramping.

In 1947 management of Silver Line passed to Henry Barraclough who had just purchased a small but profitable tramping concern, Dene Shipping Company. While the around the world liner service was prestigious it wasn't particularly profitable and Barraclough decided Silver Line should move out of liner shipping and into tramping. The final liner sailing occurred in 1951 and Silver Line's participation in the round the world service then terminated. The pre-war liners were all sold by the end of 1954, one of the last to go being the "Silverteak", which visited Bluff on charter to Port Line.

In 1974 Silver Line became a subsidiary of the Vlasov Group. This group was founded by Alexandre Vlasov, a Russian born to Cossack peasants in 1880 but forced to flee Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution. Settling in Romania

his first venture into shipowning was the small steamer "Boris" in 1928. Having moved to Milan in 1938 he founded Societa Italiana Trasporti Marittimi, known as SITMAR. Post World War Two Sitmar obtained a contract from the International Refugee Organisation for the transport of displaced persons and later was contracted by the Australian Government to carry migrants to Australia. This ceased in 1971, and Sitmar Line was then renamed Sitmar Cruises with headquarters in Los Angeles. Sitmar was sold to P&O in 1988 with the former Sitmar ships being absorbed into the associated Princess Cruises, several subsequently visiting Fiordland.

Vlasov's partner in Sitmar had been the Lefebvre family and the two again joined forces in 1992 to form a new company, Silversea Cruises, its first ships being the "Silver Cloud" and "Silver Wind" delivered in 1994 and 1995 respectively. Operating at the top end of the cruising market, Silversea ships have been regular visitors to Fiordland for many years but the "Silver Discoverer" is the first of the fleet to visit the Port of Bluff.