

The Bluff

portsider

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IN THE COMMUNITY



OBITUARY TOM SHIRLEY 1922~2015



Tom Shirley in Chairman mode complete with Southland Harbour Board tie

TOM SHIRLEY will be remembered with affection by all who knew him. His association with the Port of Bluff began in 1971 when he became Gore's representative on the Southland Harbour Board, becoming chairman in December 1984. During his time in the chair, Tom oversaw the transition from

Harbour Board to Port Company with the establishment of South Port on 1 October 1988, retiring in 1993. Very much a man of the people, Tom endeared himself to the staff and seemed to be on first name terms with everyone from chief executive to gardener, being as comfortable discussing finance with the directors as he was yarning with a yard hand about prospects for the coming rugby season.

Born into a farming family near Gore, Tom Shirley was still a child when the family moved to Invercargill where Tom was educated. Having worked for a time in an ironmongery business in July 1941 Tom enlisted in the Army, joining the 1st Battalion Southland Regiment, Second NZEF, but in 1942 transferred to the Royal New Zealand Navy. After service in the Pacific aboard minesweepers, Tom sailed to Britain where he joined the Royal Navy's submarine service, perhaps the most hazardous of naval duties, and was appointed to HMS Tactitian.

Returning to New Zealand in 1946 Tom married Peg Paterson, with whom he'd had a long-range courtship with throughout the war. In 1949 the family, now augmented by Nola, the first of five

daughters with Joy, Pam, Lynne and Beccy to follow, shifted to Gore where Tom opened his home decorating shop, Shirley & Co. Tom's long record of public service began in 1956 with election to the Gore Borough Council, followed by roles in the Southland United Council, the Southland Regional Council and, of course, the Southland Harbour Board/South Port.

Sport also benefitted from Tom's input. He played cricket for Appleby and in rugby captained Pirates to the 1949 Galbraith Shield, then played cricket for Celtic and rugby for Albion after his shift to Gore. His playing days over, he became a respected referee and leading rugby administrator being rewarded with life membership of many organisations, including the Southland Rugby Football Union and becoming Southland sports administrator of the year in 1975.

Tom died in August in Southland hospital following a fall. He fitted a lot into his 93 years and of Tom it can be truly said – his was a life well lived.

SHIP-HANDLING IS AN ART, some maintain, but should the artist err then plenty of bollard pull helps to rectify the situation. Bollard pull in Bluff has been augmented by the purchase of the 40 ton bollard pull tug "Te Matua" from Port of Tauranga Limited. As the accompanying photo and that on the cover show, the "Te Matua" is of distinctive appearance with her funnel located ahead of the wheelhouse, offset to port and also angled that way to minimise the field of vision obscured. The position of the funnel recognises that Voith tractor tugs such as "Te Matua" when manoeuvring in port are as likely to be travelling astern as ahead and when pushing or pulling work over the stern making the view aft of paramount importance.



Cover Story 'TE MATUA' joins the South Port Fleet

Three's a crowd in the entrance channel – "Te Matua" with "Monowai" and "Hauroko".



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Front Cover. South Port's new tug 'Te Matua' inbound for Bluff with her future fleet-mate 'Hauroko' in attendance. (See article above).

SOUTH PORT'S

HELEN YOUNG has recently taken up the newly created position of Human Resource Advisor after a number of years practicing as a lawyer specialising in employment relations and human resource management.

Helen's first few months at South Port have been spent getting to know who we are and what we all do across our marine services, cargo and container shipping, and on-site warehousing divisions. Her office is situated right next to the main road and rail line access to the container terminal so she's seen (and heard) first hand how busy, dynamic and versatile South Port is!

Before joining the Port, Helen was Chief Executive at Sport Southland for nearly ten years, a role she loved because it gave her a chance to combine work with her passion for sport and recreation. Helen is still actively involved in sports administration and currently sits on the board of the Southland Sharks (I remind our readers NBL Champs), so we're expecting basketball tickets on offer next season!

GREG SMITH has accepted the Open Country Dairy Supervisor role, following the resignation of Kerry Demchy choosing to move north to be closer to his family. Greg comes to the Port from a project management / drilling and exploration background having worked in New Zealand, Australia & Indonesia. Greg and his wife (Sarah Smith, South Port Finance Administrator) moved to Bluff a year ago and most recently he worked for McNeill Drilling in Southland. Prior to this he was in the New Zealand Army for 9 years. Greg and Sarah enjoy the outdoors and will often be found tramping, hunting, fishing and exploring, in fact he could be considered an 'adrenaline junkie' having sky dived over 3,000 times!

KERRY DRIVER is a new addition to the marine team. He has taken over the role of Marine Supervisor from Murray Kelman who has shifted into an engineering role at the Port. Kerry was born in Marton but grew up and lived in Palmerston North until he finished at Massey University in 1998. He worked as a warehouse store man and a lifeguard in Palmerston North and liked the idea of cruising around Europe on an OE and spending time on a US children's Summer Camp, so off he went overseas.

Later he decided that someone else should have the privilege of funding his travels. He joined the Navy in 2002 and spent 13 years living in Auckland and Wellington, as well as getting to travel all over the world - some places were memorable like the beaches in Hawaii, some not so good like the swamps of Sudan!

Fast forward to 2009 and he met Susan (Invercargill born & bred) and she thought it would be a good idea to get Kerry away from the lattes of Ponsonby and move him south. Living in Southland allows him to become involved in his favourite pastimes; cycling, diving and an array of other sports without having to be stuck in traffic for an hour or two just to get there. So he packed up with Susan and his young son McLeod and moved to Invercargill.

PEOPLE

Welcome to the Team!



Helen Young making a presentation to a captivated audience.



Greg Smith happy in his new role.



Marine Supervisor, Kerry Driver, beside the "Te Matua".

Intermodal Freight Centre Mersey Street, Invercargill

South Port is to begin construction of an inland port in Invercargill this month. Known as the Intermodal Freight Centre (IFC) a 4,000m² warehouse will be constructed primarily as a container unpacking / packing facility that is strategically located adjacent to the KiwiRail container transfer site. South Port Chairman, Mr Rex Chapman said "with larger container ships coming soon to New Zealand, the ports able to host them will need to look beyond their own backyard for cargo to fill these ships. Inland ports and freight centres are the key to aggregating this cargo".

The completion and expected opening of the facility is July 2016.



ABOVE: Geoff Finnerty and South Port personnel collecting the ACC Workplace Safety Award.

BELOW: Local Director Jeremy McClean, Mark O'Connor and Chairman Rex Chapman displaying the three awards received at the gala event.



BLUFF FOCUS ON Business Awards



ABOVE: Mark O'Connor and South Port personnel collecting the Invercargill City Council (more than 15 FTE) Business Award from Cr N Boniface (centre).

BELOW: Business awards on display in Bluff.



CENTRE, FROM LEFT: Kris Walker, Hayden Mikkelsen, Lara Stevens, Steve Gilkison, Jeremy McClean, Jamie May, Mark O'Connor, Geoff Finnerty, Gareth Carson, Rex Chapman, Frank O'Boyle and Nigel Gear accepting the spoils from the evening.

WESTPAC SOUTHLAND BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Southland Chamber of Commerce recently held their biannual event showcasing the very best of Southland Business. A crowd of about 350 people including the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Bill English, gathered at the Ascot Park Hotel to take in the awards ceremony. Ten awards were up for grabs with South Port entering in two categories and being named finalists in both the Workplace Safety and Business (more than 15 FTE) awards. The evening started in the best possible fashion with South Port winning the Workplace Safety and then shortly after received the Business award. Management and Directors were very pleased with this outcome and even more so when, as a result of winning both categories it entered, South Port was named the Westpac Supreme Award winner for the evening, completing a treble of outstanding successes. Judge Larry Mitchell, of Crowe Horwath, said in a statement, South Port's application was "outstanding" and congratulated the Company

on its strong governance, process driven approach and commitment to continuous improvement. South Port Marketing Assistant, Jamie May, who co-ordinated the Company's entry, said "South Port was extremely proud to win the ACC Workplace Safety and Invercargill City Council sponsored business awards, and winning the Supreme award topped off a 'superb' night. Thanks go to the more than 90 South Port staff for their ongoing focus on continuous improvement, critical suppliers and also the local importers and exporters who continue to support the business. Finally, thanks are extended to principal sponsor Westpac and the Chamber of Commerce for putting on a great night highlighting the best of Southland business."

South Port were finalists in two categories when the inaugural event was first held in 2013 with over double the amount of entries received for the 2015 event.



South Port Executive Assistant Kirsten Hoyle (left) with Bluff Kindergarten teachers Helen Jackson, Jasmine Heads and children.

In the Community

As a Company, we like to contribute to the local community, this can range from donations, products and staff members' time. So we thought it only fitting (pun intended) that when the Bluff Kindergarten approached us for beanies to keep the roll of 25 children warm, we were happy to help.

The feedback from the children has been outstanding. Kindergarten Administrator Julie Davis said "the kids just love their hats. They love how they all have the same hats and their names on them. The teachers really appreciate the donation from South Port as it allows our tamariki to be active explorers outside in the colder months by wearing their beanies both in kindergarten and in our local community. So thank you, thank you, thank you!"

When the beanies were delivered to the Kindergarten some of the children said they felt special now because they have the same hat as their dad. A small reward with a great result.

The Strongest Link



"Liangchow" sailing from Bluff carrying 130 years of history.

No other shipping company has a more enduring link with the Port of Bluff than that of the China Navigation Company Limited. Its long history with the Port dates back to 18 August 1885 when its steamer "Tamsui" arrived to discharge the first of the new season's tea from Foochow. The history continued with the maiden voyage of the company's latest ship, the "Liangchow", which called in Bluff during October to discharge fertiliser from Beihai. She is the latest of the company's 'BDelta39' type bulk carriers to be delivered, the company having 24 of the type either in service or under construction. Somehow 'fertiliser from Beihai' doesn't evoke the same romantic aura as 'the new season's tea from Foochow'.

Pink for a Day

South Port turned 'Pink for a Day' in October to support the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation. An Initiative promoted by the foundation meant that during October a workplace may nominate a day to turn their organisation pink. Fundraising initiatives included a bake sale, BBQ lunch (well done to the marine department) and the sale of pink high-viz vests. Approximately \$700 was raised on the day with all proceeds going back to the foundation. A special thanks to Kirsten Hoyle, Lara Stevens and the administration team for coordinating the event, top job.

Below: South Port staff getting into the spirit of 'Pink for a Day'.



Happy Retirement

EVAN LEWIS recently retired from the Port after 34 years working for, (originally the Southland Harbour Board) then later South Port. Beginning as an engineer working on meat loaders and later moving to an MPI role, servicing the ships garbage, water and other general tasks around the Port. He has chosen to be closer to the family in Australia, specifically New South Wales, Cobar, 700km North West of Sydney. Enjoy your retirement Evan.



Evan and his wife Lynda at his retirement farewell.

POWER FOR THE FUTURE

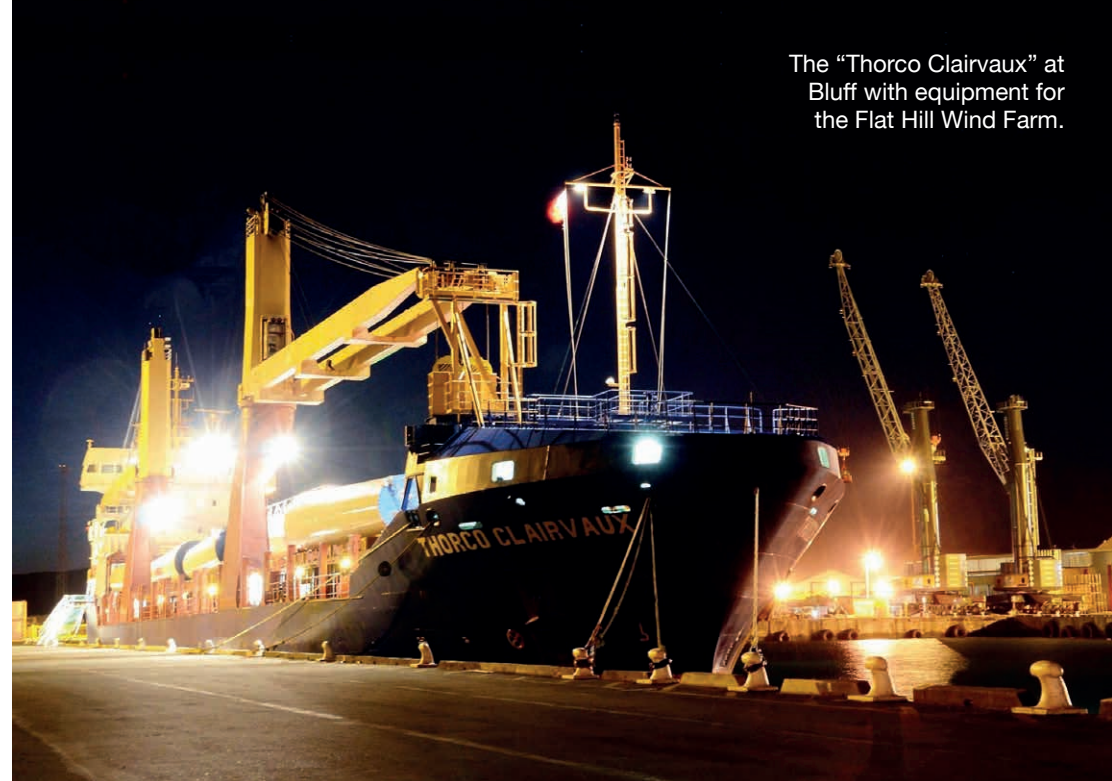
Sustainable energy has come to Bluff, or at least to its outskirts, with the commissioning of the Flat Hill Wind Farm just west of our metropolis. Proposals for a wind farm at Flat Hill were first mooted in 2009 with consents finally confirmed in March 2013, but it was not until November 2014 that the first sod was turned and construction began. The company behind the new wind farm is Pioneer Generation whose Chief Executive commented that "The wind resource in Bluff is one of the best in New Zealand". Residents of Bluff would have to agree that wind is certainly one of our major resources.

Parts and equipment for the project were imported through Bluff with the turbine towers evident in the photograph of the "Thorco Clairvaux" taken shortly after arrival. Eight turbines were installed, each tower being 44 metres high with a blade diameter of 52 metres, the maximum overall height being 81 metres. Each turbine required foundations incorporating 120 cubic metres of concrete and the overall cost of the wind farm was about \$16 million. Output is 6.8 megawatts, enough for about 2,500 homes. The Flat Hill Wind Farm was officially opened on 31 August 2015 by the Member of Parliament for Invercargill, Sarah Dowie, opening day coinciding with the last day of the oyster season so another of Bluff's major resources would have been much in evidence.

POWER FROM THE PAST

From the clean, green, sustainable energy of a wind farm to the carbon-credit consumption of a one hundred year old monster – but what a monster. First of the famous AB 'Pacific' steam locomotives was AB 608 which came from the Addington Railway Workshops, Christchurch, in 1915, and 100 years later is still going strong, currently taking a group of rail enthusiasts on a tour of what is left of the South Island's rail network. In 1925 AB 608 was named Passchendaele 'In memory of those members of the New Zealand Railways who fell in the Great War'.

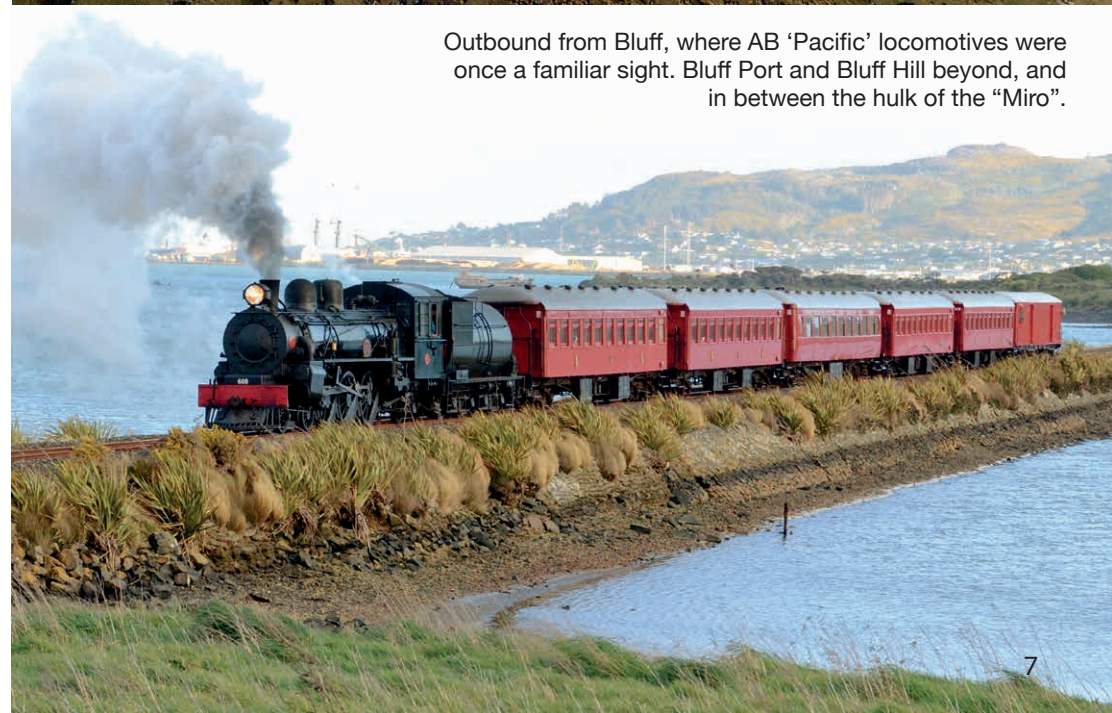
141 locomotives were built to this design of which seven have been preserved. Some interesting specs: they weigh 52.1 tonnes (with tender 86.1), coal-fired, maximum speed 97 kms/h, tractive effort 89.1 kN.



The "Thorco Clairvaux" at Bluff with equipment for the Flat Hill Wind Farm.



Overview of the Flat Hill site with Bluff in the background.



Outbound from Bluff, where AB 'Pacific' locomotives were once a familiar sight. Bluff Port and Bluff Hill beyond, and in between the hulk of the "Miro".

WESTFAL-LARSEN

Below: The bow badge of the “Finnanger” is a symbol of Bergen.



DURING THE AFTERNOON OF 21 February 1928 the Norwegian whaling factory ship “C. A. Larsen” struck Whero Rock while inbound for Patterson Inlet, Stewart Island. Although she was soon refloated her foredeck was awash and whale oil was spilling from her damaged tanks, so she was deliberately beached on the shallows between Ulva and Native Islands. South Port’s forebear, the Bluff Harbour Board, despatched the tugs “Southland” and “Theresa Ward” to assist but it soon became obvious that the damage was such that the cargo of whale oil would have to be pumped out to lighten the ship before repairs could be attempted. The brand new tanker “Spinanger” was chartered from fellow Norwegians Westfal-Larsen and arrived in Patterson Inlet on 4 April 1928 to take on the oil, the first of the company’s ships to visit New Zealand. Westfal-Larsen ships have been occasional visitors ever since.

H. Westfal-Larsen founded his company in Bergen in 1905. Having approached a local shipbuilder for terms to undertake the construction of a ship he then persuaded local investors to take shares in the new vessel. The steamship

“Hardanger” was delivered on 10 October 1905 into Westfal-Larsen’s management. More new ships followed in the ensuing years and such was Westfal-Larsen’s standing that other shipowners entrusted the management of their ships to him. In 1917 Westfal-Larsen entered the oil trades with delivery of the tanker “Malmanger”. It was not an auspicious start as she was lost on her maiden voyage after striking a mine off the Irish coast, but subsequent tankers were more successful and by 1938 Westfal-Larsen had the largest tanker fleet in Norway.

Nor was the dry cargo fleet neglected and in 1921 Westfal-Larsen moved from tramp operations into liner service, participating in the County Line which operated from the St Lawrence and other North American ports to Europe. Further liner services followed from the West Coast, North America to Europe and another around South America. By the outbreak of the Second World War Westfal-Larsen had a fleet of thirty-six ships, many being high-class cargo liners with passenger accommodation, a handful of them traditional tramp ships, and twelve were tankers. Twenty-two were lost during the conflict.

Post-war priority was given to resuming the liner services and it wasn’t until the 1950’s that the tanker fleet was rebuilt. By 1955 the Westfal-Larsen fleet was restored to prewar levels but difficulties lay ahead, particularly for the company’s liner services. Many South American countries were expanding their own merchant fleets and favoured these companies, flag discrimination becoming such an issue that Westfal-Larsen began withdrawing from liner services in 1958, finally ceasing all liner shipping in 1982.

Concurrent with the wind-down of liner



services Westfal-Larsen formed a joint venture with other Norwegian shipowners to establish Star Bulk Shipping Company in July 1964. Star Bulk became one of the biggest dry-bulk carriers in the world and its ships have been regular visitors to Bluff since the 1970’s. In 1995 Westfal-Larsen established Masterbulk Private Limited as a wholly owned subsidiary in Singapore and in 2009 withdrew from Star Bulk. This was followed in 2014 by an agreement between Westfal-Larsen Shipping AS and Saga Forest Carriers International AS to form a joint shipping pool to combine the open-hatch bulk carrier fleets of Masterbulk, Saga and Hesnes Group. The resulting fleet of over fifty modern open-hatch vessels is managed by Saga Welco AS.

Meanwhile the tanker fleet had been rebuilt to around a dozen product tankers and in 1964 Westfal-Larsen entered into a joint operation with fellow Bergen tanker owner Odfjell Shipping Company which evolved into Odfjell Westfal-Larsen Tankers A/S in 1980. Although this collaboration terminated in 1990 Westfal-Larsen continues to operate a fleet of product/chemical tankers to this day, two of these, the “Finnanger” and “Fjellanger”, being the most recent Westfal-Larsen ships to visit Bluff.



Rolling into Bluff, “Fjellanger” approaching the pilot station.

Photo, top left: Funnel colours of Westfal-Larsen.