

MAI I TE WĀPU

From the Wharf | Community Newsletter



Vol. 3 | Issue. 2 | December 2023

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CHANGING GEARS

Tēnā koutou katoa,

The dredging component of project Kia Whakaū was successfully completed on 30 September 2023. An official opening ceremony was held on 30 October on the Town Wharf attended by customers, contractors, the community, local iwi, and staff. It was also a fitting way to see off our Chair, Rex Chapman, who retired the following day at the Annual Shareholders Meeting.

There have been several positive milestones that have been achieved during this project. Initially, when the business case was first presented to the Board, the target was to achieve a minimum of 0.75m of additional depth in the entrance channel through a drilling and blasting campaign at the cost of approximately \$20M.

The result was that we achieved 1m of additional depth in the entrance channel, without the need to drill and blast, and at a cost considerably less than the estimated \$20M. The drill and blast campaign provided us with several challenges, regarding both the time to complete the job and safety. This was primarily due to the very active nature of the tide in the entrance channel and the need for divers to lay the explosive charges in these conditions.

We therefore must thank our predecessors who carried out

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drilling and blasting campaigns in the 70s and early 80s. These campaigns obviously fractured enough rock in the channel to allow today's modern dredging equipment to remove material and create our new depth.

Currently, the Port is waiting for the completion of new electronic charts detailing the new draft conditions from LINZ before we can start receiving vessels with deeper drafts.

The Port Open Day was held on Sunday, 1 October 2023. We really enjoyed the opportunity to open our gates and show off our infrastructure and operations to the community. A huge thank you goes out to the organising committee and our staff that gave up their time to get involved in the lead-up, and the port tour activities on the day to make this another successful event.

A recent development for the Port was the opening of an Invercargill office. The office will support up to six employees at any one time and will provide additional flexibility for our staff to work remotely when they have other commitments in Invercargill.

There are two articles that I would like to draw your attention to inside this newsletter. One is on John Henderson, our former Chief Pilot and Operations Manager who sadly passed away recently, and Paul Taylor, our current General Cargo Supervisor, and his impressive 41 years as a Fireman for the Bluff Volunteer Fire Brigade.

Finally, I would like to thank the community for your support over these past twelve months and hope that you all get to spend some quality time with your whānau over the Christmas period.

Ngā mihi nui,
Nigel Gear
Chief Executive



ONE TEAM



GO THE EXTRA MILE



WORK SMARTER

SOUTH PORT COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP

Applications for a scholarship to undertake apprenticeship training, tertiary or university education are invited from eligible students and individuals who have resided in the Bluff Ward for three or more years. Further details and application forms are available upon request by contacting:

Charlotte Scoles

Telephone: (03) 212 6050

Email: cscoles@southport.co.nz

Applications close at 4pm on Friday, 5 January 2024. Late applications will not be considered.



ACT WITH INTEGRITY



SAFETY FIRST



MANAAKITANGA

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Kia ora all,

Just like that, Christmas is around the corner, and our second edition of the South Port Community Newsletter – Mai i te Wāpu (From the Wharf) - has been delivered.

This edition is bumper-to-bumper with relative information and news, including the 2024 South Port Community Scholarship, which is now open for applications. This initiative greatly benefits the recipient, so if you're thinking of studying, have already applied, or are continuing your study next year, please reach out for further information.

South Port is proud of its community and, as such, has been putting in the extra mahi to ensure that it is reflected visually in its property around the township. You will read more about this later in the newsletter.

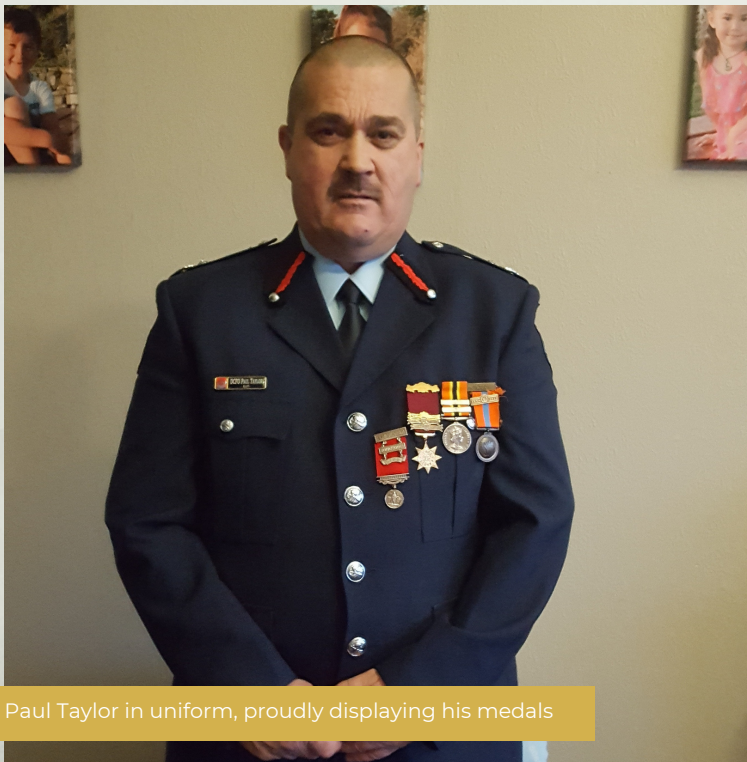
I thoroughly enjoyed interviewing Paul 'Tails' Taylor about his retirement from the Bluff Volunteer Fire Brigade; Tails is a very genuine and kind character with many stories to tell.

Last but not least, if you attended the Port Open Day in October, I truly hope you enjoyed yourself. The team at South Port had a wonderful time hosting you all, both on the Port and at the Entertainment Hub at the Bluff Oyster Festival site.

I wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Ngā mihi,

Charlotte Scoles
Communications Advisor
cscoles@southport.co.nz



Paul Taylor in uniform, proudly displaying his medals

TELLING 'TAILS' AFTER RETIREMENT

After forty-one years and ten months to the day, Paul Taylor (affectionately known as Tails), South Port's General Cargo Supervisor, is officially hanging up his firefighting helmet. He kindly reflected on his time in Fire and Emergency New Zealand with The Portsider editor earlier this month.

Back on 25 February, 1982, a young Paul Taylor was excitedly preparing for his first shift as a Fireman at the Bluff Volunteer Fire Brigade, unaware that it would be the start of a life-long passion, of which the flame would still be burning over 41 years on. He was fascinated with fighting fires at an early age, and can easily recall seeing the vehicles 'belt it past' his house as a kid, which is what really sparked the initial interest. Several years later, he joined the Brigade for various reasons; while he admits he is a wee bit of a pyromaniac with a curiosity for fire, the main reasons were centered around helping the community, getting involved with mates, and just 'doing his bit' for the locals in their time of need.

Reflecting on the changes throughout his time in the Brigade, several changes come to mind. Firstly, back when he signed up, it was just that - you simply attended a meeting, had someone nominate you, and it was official. Nowadays, there are several courses and formal tests required to become a firefighter; while these hurdles are in place to keep everyone safe, it does make it harder for recruitment, especially in a small town such as Bluff.

The duty of a Fireman has also changed; it's gone from simply fighting fires and responding to accidents, to callouts for all medical and CPR events. These can often be quite traumatic, however, after any callout, good or bad, the Brigade team rally around their colleagues like family, and support one another for post-callout debriefs. Counselling is also a service that has been very beneficial over the years.

Tails worked his way up the ranks throughout his career, spending four years as the Deputy Crew Chief, and another six years as Crew Chief, which is no small feat. He also received a Life Membership for 25 years' service back in 2013. After joining a crew of 22 back in 1989, he leaves behind a team of 18, many of whom are young and ready to work their way up the ranks.

His passion for the service provided by the Brigade is clear, particularly when recalling an incident that involved his daughter Jennifer, when she was around age three. Tails was lying on his back, playing with Jennifer, throwing her in the air and catching her, when the siren went off - instead of handing Jennifer to his wife, Lynley, his first instinct was to get up and run, almost dropping Jennifer mid-flight in the process! "When the siren goes, all I think is 'someone needs help' and I am out the door as quick as quick can be," he explained.

Tails recently took on a new role at the Port, and loves the challenge it provides, so he's really looking forward to getting on with the task at hand; however, he's truly going to miss his involvement with the Brigade every single time the siren goes off, not to mention the strong comradery with his fellow Firefighters. "They're a brilliant bunch of guys, they wouldn't ever send anyone into a situation they wouldn't go into themselves - I'm just going to miss it, but it's time for those young ones to shine."

On behalf of the community, thank you for your service, Tails.

TEAM Q + A WITH: **WILLY ISIAH**

Willy Isiah has been working for South Port since 2009, and in that time has operated a wide array of South Port's heavy machinery and is now one of the Container team's primary trainers for new staff. Before starting with South Port, Willy often worked on-site in Shed 2, bagging fertiliser. As he recalls, "I must've done alright when I was helping out, because I woke up to the phone ringing, and it was Pete Cade asking for me to come down for a chat." Willy was hired soon after, moving veneers and MDF. Since then, he's been a valuable member of the South Port team as a Depot Operator, so we sat down with Willy to learn more about his time with the Company and a little about him.

What are three words to describe you?

"Confident, competitive, and lead by example. I know that's more than three words, but leading by example is really important to me."

What do you enjoy most about working for South Port?

"It has to be the variety, could be washing and surveying containers one day, then driving the different machines the next day. Even when you're driving there are all the different boats (container, bulk, etc.). Compared with being stuck doing the same thing, it's pretty good, and you never stop learning. The Depot's got a good bunch of guys and girls who get stuck in and get the job done."

What do you view as your greatest work achievement?

"Training people on the machines, I feel really chuffed with that. When you're out there you want people to be on the same page, especially around safety. We're all in the same space and if you don't have to worry it's really good."

What's the most difficult part of your job?

"Definitely the shift work aspect of the job. Obviously, everyone manages it as best you can, but the body isn't really designed to operate like that. That's how it is for me anyway."

What's the best part about living in Bluff?

"I mean the closeness to work is good. I came down from up north 26 years ago, and I'm still here. There's a lot of good people and I like to think that I have given back with 18 years in the Bluff Volunteer Fire Service."

What do you do outside of work?

"I like to ride my bike into town, I love fishing and diving. My dad taught me to dive when I was five and I've been doing it ever since. If I can keep falling off a boat as I get older, then I'm all good; the hard part's getting back on board!"



Willy Isiah, Depot Operator, in one of the forklifts

JOIN THE **SOUTH PORT TEAM!**

COORDINATOR - SHIPPING AND MOORING SERVICES

We're after an experienced co-ordinator to join our fantastic team responsible for safe berthing and transit in and out of Bluff. If you're keen on a career in the port industry, this is a great opportunity for you!

This position works as part of a dynamic and 'hands-on' team, responsible for coordinating lines crews who are trained in the mooring and unmooring of all types of vessels calling at the Port.

The Port operates 24/7, and the roster rotates weekly between day and night shifts (only required on-site at night for actual shipping movements), plus one weekend in four. This isn't a regular nine-to-five job, so you'll need to have a good work-life balance and understand shared responsibility for managing fatigue and not burning the candle at both ends!

Take advantage of this golden opportunity - reach out to find out more! Contact Thomas Lewis:

Telephone: (03) 212 8159

Email: tlewis@southport.co.nz

2023 PORT OPEN DAY

During October, South Port held its biennial Port Open Day. Tickets were booked out in the first five days of going live, which was beyond the organising committee's wildest expectations - the team was seriously excited. There were just under 600 tickets available, over three two-hour time slots – 9am, 11am, and 1pm.

The aim of the event was to give friends, whānau, and the public a glimpse at what South Port does, and what it's doing for the region. Ticket holders got to step foot on a tugboat, see a tug demonstration, walk into the depths of the Cold Stores, see how the log operators and woodchip trucks function, watch demonstrations of the cranes and forklifts, and learn about the finer details of what the Port does daily. This was well received, with positive feedback coming in from attendees.

"What an incredible experience. The guides were amazing and so good with all the kids on our tour, we could really feel the passion and pride they have for the port."

"Thank you South Port for letting us in for a look around, Rome especially loved the toy boats. I really enjoyed watching the cranes in action!"

"The tour was absolutely amazing - informative and exciting. A big thank you to everybody who made the day such a success!"

The Entertainment Hub, located at the Bluff Oyster Festival site, was open to anyone and everyone. All the children's entertainment, including face painting, bouncy castles, astro ball, and mini jeeps, was free. It was a hive of activity throughout the day, with attendees soaking up the atmosphere, before excitedly lining up and jumping on a bus, in preparation for the tour to begin.

There were 60 team members from South Port who volunteered their time, which was quite clearly appreciated. Volunteers have been asked for feedback on what went well, what didn't, and what could we improve on, to help make 2025 bigger and better!

1. Visitors aboard the "Te Matua" tug boat, prior to watching the "Takitimu II" pilot boat demonstration
2. Children and adults alike, all rugged up, exiting the Cold Stores
3. A forklift operator performs a demonstration on how the Hyster top lifter picks up and moves containers around the Port
4. Free face painting was just one of the entertainment options on offer in the Entertainment Hub
5. Passengers were treated to 'up close and personal' moments with the tug boats
6. Demonstrations included the moving of logs, how woodchips are emptied out of trucks, and how the woodchips are moved around by machinery



CONSERVATION WEEK PLANTING

Conservation week was held from 14 - 20 August 2023, which is an occasion that South Port uses to immerse the team in nature and enjoy a fresh perspective on the space around Bluff, along with assisting with the restoration and protection of the natural environment on and around Bluff Hill.

The Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust, which was established in 2008, aimed to get more than 20,000 plants into the ground - a number that might sound far-fetched but was achieved with ease thanks to the collective effort of the community.

South Port had over 20 employees assist the Trust throughout the week, which was enjoyed by all.



BLUFF RANGATAHI ZONE

The Rangatahi Zone, an initiative launched in 2022 by the Tuurama Trust to add some fun, healing, inspiration, and creativity to the Bluff community, was held in the second week of the school holidays. Operating over a number of venues in Bluff, the event was all about making whānau connections and offering supportive advice between big doses of nanny loving cuddles. Entirely free, it was aimed at all Southlanders aged 10 - 18 years old.

Activities included cooking, sports, boxing, harakeke flax weaving, smash-it room, axe throwing, gaming zone, hair cuts, a manicure station, and free food for all. The South Port team took over on the cooking station; they were whizzes on the waffles and BBQ, and they thoroughly enjoyed giving back to the community.



KIA WHAKAŪ PROJECT CELEBRATED

South Port is pleased to announce the successful completion of project Kia Whakaū, to deepen the entrance channel from 8.7m to 9.7m chart datum, a maximum operating draft of 10.7m at high tide. "This is a major project for the Port and will benefit the Port's customers and the region for years to come and aligns with the Company's purpose to facilitate the best logistic solutions for the region," said South Port Chair, Rex Chapman.

South Port Chief Executive Nigel Gear said that the Company is taking a staged approach by declaring an interim operating draft of 10.3m at high tide to assess the handling of deeper draft vessels before moving to the full 10.7m, in line with our Safety First values. This achievement was recognised with a celebration on Monday 30 October, at the Port, with customers, contractors, staff and the local Rūnaka.



NGĀ KETE MĀTAURANGA POUNAMU CHARITABLE TRUST



This Christmas South Port, in lieu of gifts for customers, made the decision to donate \$5,000 to Ngā Kete Mātauranga Pounamu Charitable Trust. The trust distributes food parcels, with 50% going to Invercargill families, and 50% going to Bluff families.

We are proud to be supporting such a wonderful organisation, who we commend for the work they do and the services they provide.

FORESHORE ROAD + GORE STREET CLEAN-UP

Many of you may have noticed fluoro-clad South Port team members out and about, busy collecting rubbish, spraying weeds, and trimming hedges. Just like you, we take pride in our town, and we are endeavoring to keep Bluff beautiful.

If you have any property-related matters, please direct all enquiries to our Commercial Property Advisor, Renee Nyhon, in the first instance. This includes any queries regarding fishing berths or South Port owned land. Renee is very proud in her new role, having recently organised a working bee on Foreshore Road, which was evidently successful.

Renee can be contacted on:
Phone: (03) 212 7155
Email: rnyhon@southport.co.nz

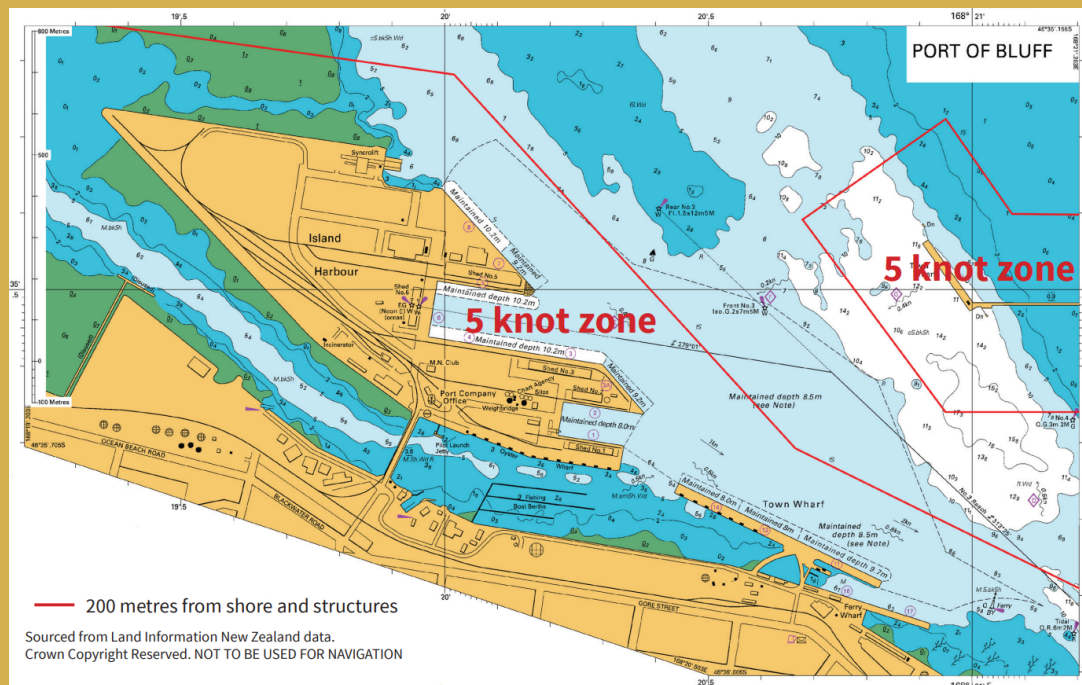


SUMMER SAFETY REMINDER

Environment Southland and Maritime NZ will be very visible in the Bluff area during the holiday break as part of the 'No Excuses' campaign in an effort to deter unsafe boating behaviour. We want everybody to enjoy the boating season and stay safe, so check out the safer boating information below.

Remember:

- Lifejackets must be worn in vessels 6 metres and under, carried in all vessels, and worn at times of heightened risk
- You must carry two forms of working communication - VHF radio, EPIRB, flares, and cellphone (if coverage permits)
- Check the weather before going out, be a responsible skipper, and avoid alcohol consumption

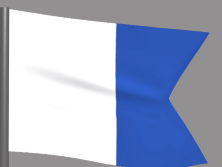


SPEED LIMITS

Watch your speed near the shore, wharves, and jetties.

Do not exceed 5 knots within:

- 200m of the shore or any structure
- 200m of any vessel flying Flag Alpha (diver's flag)
- 50m of another vessel
- 50m of a person in the water





Vale

CAPTAIN J. A. HENDERSON

John Alexander Henderson was born in Greenock in January 1947. He made an early decision that a seafaring life was for him and, after pre-sea training in Greenock, joined Scotland's premier shipping company, Ben Line, which traded mainly to the Far East, as a trainee deck officer. Having completed the required training period, John then sat for and passed his Second Mate's Certificate.

In the hope of trading to Australia and New Zealand, John joined the New Zealand Shipping Company. He eventually made it to New Zealand, and even got to visit Bluff. Obviously, he liked this part of the world as after securing his First Mate's certificate, he joined the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand, his first ship with them being the "Kaitoke," one of the fabled, trans-Tasman 'slow greens.'

With his Master's certificate safely negotiated in Auckland, John continued with the Union Steam Ship Company until he was seconded to Hunt Petroleum in 1977. At the time, Hunt was searching for oil in the Deep South Basin, and John was appointed to the oil rig tenders which were based in Bluff. While on the tenders, John obtained a Pilotage Exemption for the port of Bluff, a precursor of things to come.

Shortly after he returned to the Union Company fleet, the Southland Harbour Board began advertising a pilot vacancy, a position for which John applied and, in February 1979, was duly appointed as a Junior Pilot. On 1st May 1979, he passed his examination as pilot in what proved a momentous year as it is also when he married Wendy, the two having met while she worked in Union Company's Bluff office and John was on loan to Hunt Petroleum.

In 1982, John was appointed Operations Manager, being responsible for marine and cargo operations at Bluff and for introducing "The Bluff Portsider," one of the few port company magazines in New Zealand that is still published. Major changes occurred in 1988 to the operation of the country's ports, with the demise of Harbour Boards and the introduction of Port Companies. One result was that the Harbour Master became a council appointee, and to facilitate this changeover, John took over as Harbour Master shortly before the Southland Harbour Board became South Port New Zealand Ltd.

Another momentous change was the rapid escalation in the number of cruise ships passing through Fiordland and Stewart Island. With former Harbour Master Len Mounsey the only pilot qualified for coastal and Fiordland waters, this created a steep learning curve for John and the senior pilots, but one that was quickly negotiated.

In 1999, John decided to take voluntary redundancy from South Port in search of new career moves. His first post-South Port move could hardly have been a greater change as he and Wendy became moteliere in Invercargill, taking over the Colonial Motor Inn located in a prime position on Tay Street, the continuation of State Highway 1 into Invercargill. After a year as a motelier the sea beckoned John back and he joined Strait Shipping, serving as Master on that company's Cook Strait ferry service between Picton and Wellington.

John retired in 2015 to his home in the leafy suburb of Otatara on the outskirts of Invercargill. Tragically his beloved Wendy died on 24 June 2021, John having taken care of her through her illness. On 18 September this year John died peacefully at home. Given the variety of roles he had in the New Zealand maritime industry there will be many, both ashore and afloat, who will mourn his passing. He is survived by his children Karley and Callum and their families to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.