

# CRUISE



## WEEKLY



Thursday 22 Jan 2015

### WLCL appointments

**WELL-KNOWN** former Aircalin general manager Australia Ken Triffitt has joined World's Leading Cruise Lines in the newly created role of bdm for Cunard and P&O Cruises World Cruising.

WLCL has also hired Christopher Rich to fill another new role as P&O Cruises corporate groups executive, tasked with developing the groups market for the line's two forthcoming fleet additions.

### ecruising seeing double

**ONLINE** cruise pioneer ecruising.travel has laid out ambitious plans to double its business, with the recent appointment of Alastair Fernie as executive general manager (**TD** 04 Dec) expected to accelerate the company's growth.

Ecruising was founded 15 years ago by Brett Dudley, with key clients and a who's who of industry partners attending a celebratory shindig in Sydney this week.

Fernie, **pictured** above with Dudley, departed from Helloworld last year (**Travel Daily** 22 Jul) after many years with the organisation where he established Harvey's Choice Cruising and later became head of The CRUISE Team.

He formally commenced with ecruising just two weeks ago as part of expansion plans which will see him run day-to-day operations, allowing Dudley to focus on the company's popular range of cruise tours which combine cruise itineraries, flights, hotels and sightseeing.

The 15th birthday event included a testimonial from CLIA chairman and head of Royal



Caribbean Cruises in Australia Gavin Smith, who hailed Brett and Philippa Dudley for their innovative contributions to the Australian cruise industry.

They "single-handedly changed how Australians purchase cruising - they redefined the cruising landscape," he said.

Dudley said he was proudest of his decision to start a web-based business during the "tech wreck" when internet companies were crashing out of the stock market.

"Ecruising was created and thrived out of the rubble," he said.

Since then the company has garnered a host of top achiever awards, established an offshoot in Hong Kong as well as developed a loyal clientele of around 30,000 members of its "Posh Club" loyalty program.

### CLIA names finalists

**PERTH-BASED** cruising giant Bicton Travel will again contest for Cruise Agency of the Year - Australia, named one of five finalists in the category at the 2014 CLIA Cruise Industry Awards.

The newly released CLIA Awards Finalists list has Bicton nominated alongside Phil Hoffmann Travel outlets in Glenelg and Norwood, SA; Cruise Express in Balmain, NSW and Cruise Travel Centre, based in Kotara, NSW.

Two new categories making their debut will see Ozcruising, Clean Cruising and ecruising vie for the title of Online Agency of the Year - Australia.

Another new category will see Home Based/Mobile Agent of the Year go to Maxine Adams or Wendy Allen from MTA or Derek Harwood from TravelManagers.

In all, the event will see 19 awards across nine categories decided, along with a new entry into the prestigious CLIA Hall of Fame announced and honoured.

Returning as emcee for a second year running will be Channel 7's Hamish McLachlan, who will be joined by actress Melanie Vallejo.

Making its debut as the event's Platinum Sponsor will be Dubai Tourism, with Carnival Australia & Royal Caribbean as Gold Sponsors.

"The entries were of an exceptionally high standard making the judges' job that much tougher. There's no doubt that it's getting harder and harder to pick winners," CLIA Australasia general manager Brett Jardine said.

More than 500 members of the cruise industry from Australia and New Zealand will attend the gala awards dinner, to be held at The Star in Sydney on 28 Feb.

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### Koningsdam summer

**HOLLAND** America Line has confirmed its new *MS Koningsdam* ship will be deployed to the Baltic for the 2016 northern summer, based out of Amsterdam.

The ship will debut in Feb 2016 with its inaugural voyages in the Western Med (**CW** 02 Oct).

### Face to Face is back!

**Cruise Weekly** today features three pages of the latest news, plus our first Face to Face chat of the year with Nicola Caygill from Micro-Cruising - see **pg 4**.



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### NCL does dining deals

**TWO** new specialty restaurants designed by Iron Chef Jose Garces will star among a suite of new dining concepts on Norwegian Cruise Line's forthcoming vessel *Norwegian Escape*.

Bayamo by Jose Garces will offer Latin-inspired dishes and will be positioned on the ship's dining and entertainment strip, known as The Waterfront, while Spanish tapas will be on offer at Pincho.

Another new concept will be Food Republic, in which pax will be able to "experience a culinary journey" via a series of taster plates using worldwide flavours.

In addition, the first Supper Club at sea will be launched onboard *Escape* and will be exclusive to the line, providing a combined dinner and show cabaret evening.

Norwegian has also signed with Miami's Wynwood Brewing Company to see the District Brew House beer hall concept debut, offering a keg room onboard.

For more details, [CLICK HERE](#).

## RCL brews new res portal

**FEATURES** including predictive searching and customer profiling will be included in a new cruise booking platform set to be rolled out by Royal Caribbean Cruises.

Due to be released in Mar, the new system is entitled Espresso and is aimed at being a "faster, more powerful and intuitive reservations system".

The booking process compared to the current system has been designed to reduce the number of clicks from seven to five and puts the more important and frequently used sections up front.

Agents will be in full control of what, and how they view their content and results, with side-by-side comparison of itineraries and up to four stateroom categories for individual and group bookings.

Adopting a modern interface, Espresso uses centralised inventory to query available Royal Caribbean Int'l, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises cabins

and present results alongside applicable promotional offers to provide the best option to clients.

The new system will offer interactive deck plans, allowing agents to view all categories including interconnectable cabins & rooms for handicapped clients.

Royal Caribbean Int'l senior vp of sales and trade support Vicki Freed said the latest system was the latest indication of the line's commitment to making its brands the easiest to transact with.

"These new tools will deliver an easier and more intuitive booking experience for our valued travel partners. We're excited to see how this smarter, more dynamic platform will enhance their business results with our brands".

Reflecting the increasingly mobile nature of modern travel agents, the new system will also be optimised for use on tablets.

See [www.bookespresso.com](http://www.bookespresso.com) or [CLICK HERE](#) for an intro video.



**AS FAR** as spending the kids' inheritance goes, this American grandmother has it figured out.

Lee Wachtstetter, an 87-year old known onboard as Mama Lee, has clocked up seven years living, yes...living, onboard Crystal Cruises' luxury vessel *Crystal Serenity*, purchasing endless back-to-back voyages.

Cruising was a passion while her husband was alive, and in their 50 years of marriage, the pair went on 89 cruises prior to his death from cancer in 1997.

On the advice of her daughter, Lee sold her five-bedroom home and continued to live her passion, and has since become something of a ship celebrity.

Her permanent cruise passion has been tallied up to cost her around US\$164,000 per year.



## 2015 ON SALE

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### CRUISE NEWS & VIEWS

with Brett Jardine  
GM, CLIA Australasia

## Longer itineraries

I READ with interest last week that the North American market is seeing significant growth in passengers seeking longer cruises.

For years the world's most mature source market has boasted an average cruise length of around 7 days. This compares to our market where the average length of cruise has remained stable for many years at around 10 days. Whilst the volume produced from North America is substantial, based on this data, there is a lot to be said for agents in Australia and New Zealand who on average will be earning close to 30% more commission per booking!

## Vale Shannon Currie

AT JUST 39 years old, Shannon will be remembered by many from across Australia and New Zealand. He was the inaugural NZ based representative on the ICCA Board where he served for four years whilst in his position as head of Complete Cruise Solution's Auckland office. Shannon's efforts in working to bring together an industry view from NZ and to ensure Kiwis were not forgotten within the much larger Australian cruise industry are still evident today - RIP mate.

## CLIA Events

THE finer details are now being put into place to ensure the success of our upcoming Cruise360 and Cruise Industry Awards dinner. Only a limited number of tickets remain available for Cruise360 so I would encourage anyone yet to make their purchase to act soon.

Finalists in all award categories for the 14th annual Cruise Industry Awards have been announced today - congratulations to all that have been recognised.



## Heavenly Med guide

**REBRANDED** Greece & Turkey operator Celestyal Cruises has launched a new brochure for its 2015 calendar of departures.

Two ships, the *Celestyal Crystal* & *Celestyal Olympia* will operate a series of voyages in the Aegean Sea taking pax to remote and popular islands in both nations.

For details or to order a copy, call the line's local rep Discover the World on 1800 623 267.

**MEANWHILE**, fellow Discover the World client Variety Cruises has expanded its 2015/16 range with a new 8-day voyage in the Cape Verde Archipelago departing 18 Nov 2015 and a 10-day Madagascar and the Mozambique Channel sailing starting in Jul.

## Facebook polar comp

**POLAR** expedition line Aurora Expeditions has launched a new Facebook competition to find an 'Official Arctic Photographer' to send on an coming polar voyage.

To enter, simply 'like' Aurora's Facebook page and follow the links to submit your best travel photo along with 50 words on why the entrant should be picked.

The winner will receive return Economy airfare, accom & a cabin on the line's 'Across the Arctic Circle' expedition travelling from Scotland to Spitsbergen in Jun.

## CAU brand recovery

**CARNIVAL** Cruise Lines is continuing its climb back up the consumer perception ranks in the US, voted by BrandIndex as the most improved brand of 2014.

The YouGov BrandIndex Buzz Rankings Report found Carnival improved by nearly double the level of the second ranked brand.

A number of trade & consumer initiatives has helped the line regain ground lost after a disastrous period in early 2013 which saw a range of high-profile incidents and negative headlines.

Such initiatives in the US market include the Carnival LIVE concert program, Seuss at Sea, the Great Vacation Guarantee and more.

## Princess goes green for Emerald



**PREPARATIONS** are already underway at the Princess Cruises office nearly two years ahead of schedule for the arrival in Australia of *Emerald Princess*.

The recent announcement that the 3,082-passenger vessel will ply its trade in local waters for the 2016/17 season (**CW** 09 Jan) has the team digging out everything of Emerald colour in the office.

As a result, the team has now adopted green as an unofficial company uniform, put up green balloons throughout the office.

Green lollies, cupcakes and even green slurpies were also rolled out for the team to enjoy.

*Emerald Princess* will base itself in Sydney from Nov 2016 for a five-month season until Apr 2017.

It will make up a large part of the Princess Cruises inventory for the season, complemented by another seasonal visitor in *Diamond Princess* and the year-round stalwarts *Dawn Princess*, *Sea Princess* and *Sun Princess*.

**Pictured** above are part of the Princess Cruises Aussie call centre team, from left is Nicholas McHugh, Maree Osborne, Heather Seaman, Laura Dening, Sam Mastou, Linda Divitt, Ariel White, Julie Rado, Ann Sinclair, Chantel Bracks, Grace Joo, Michele Olivier and Michael Vaccarella.

## Coast calls suppliers

**LOCAL** businesses interested in learning more about the Gold Coast Integrated Resort & Cruise Ship Terminal have the chance to attend an upcoming Local Supplier Information Session to be hosted by the Project Team.

Taking place at Metricon Stadium in Carrara on 19 Feb, topics to be covered will include projected development plans and details on how to submit a bid to compete for work opportunities.

Construction is anticipated to begin in 2017 on the basis of the project receiving approval from the Queensland Government and meeting all set guidelines.

Developers estimate 5000 new jobs sustained for ten years will be created if approval is granted.

For more information and to apply to attend, **CLICK HERE**.

## Explorer booking date

**LOYALTY** guests of Regent Seven Seas Cruises will have first access to book staterooms on the line's new *Seven Seas Explorer*, with Titanium and Platinum members now able to reserve.

Gold, Silver and Bronze guests will gain access on 26, 28 and 31 Jan respectively, prior to general reservations opening on 04 Feb.

Travel agents and guests wishing to register their interest can obtain a booking form from local rep Wiltrans - ph (02) 9265 7100.

*Seven Seas Explorer* will make its debut mid next year.



## FACE : FACE

NICOLA CAYGILL

Managing Director - Micro-Cruising



### Welcome to Face to Face, where we chat to cruise industry leaders.

#### How/why did you get into the cruise industry?

I've always wanted to work in travel, I have a Bachelor and a Masters degree in Tourism. I moved into the Leisure side after working in Corporate as I wanted to follow my passion. Expedition Cruising is an industry niche that I was searching for.

#### What is the key to your success?

Having an all-consuming interest in the subject that I spend most of waking hours selling is ultimately responsible for the great energy I have for my career and my happiness. "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful." - Albert Schweitzer.

#### What was your most memorable moment on a cruise?

The history of the Australian owned Macquarie Island in the Subantarctic Islands. It was a very rare treat to see the remnants of Sir Douglas Mawson's telegraph pole he used to communicate with Australia via Pennant Hills in Sydney (where I grew up). Also reading of Shackleton's Endurance Epic journey at the Paulet Island stage when I was looking out of my porthole seeing Paulet Island.

#### How do you spend days at sea?

I spend the time reading about the destination that the cruise is going to and attending lectures like a sea nerd, lapping it up. I tried an Elliptical machine in the gym whilst bobbing about in the Southern Ocean. I wouldn't recommend it.

#### What is the next "hot spot" in cruising destinations?

Burma has now opened up and can't build the hotels fast enough. Anywhere in the Mediterranean such as Greece and Croatia are proving to be big markets for Micro-Cruising (no real surprises there). Indonesia also has a plethora of options for Micro-Cruisers that are comparable to big ship prices and provide an authentic local experience.

#### How can cruising continue to grow in the current financial climate?

I believe the macro-economic climate will sustain any short term blips as long as our market leading Baby Boomers are wanting to see the world

before they consider themselves too old for travel.

#### What is something you wish more agents and consumers knew about cruising?

There are alternatives to the big cruises. Your active clients are catered for, your 'fly and flop' clients are catered for, even your clients with specific needs. We have wheelchair accessibility for a round the world sailing vessel! We offer skiing and diving in Antarctica, sailing on Grace Kelly's Honeymoon yacht given as a gift by Aristotle Onassis, lunch on the side of a Patagonian Fjord by helicopter, a one cabin vessel charter with seven staff including a full time masseuse, even a two passenger submarine dive to 305m under the surface.



#### Describe your perfect cruise in 25 words or less?

Any active cruise involving cycling, kayaking, snorkeling, hiking and photography. Having an authentic cultural exchange and giving back to the local hospitals and schools.

#### What is your best tip for combating sea sickness?

I'm lucky that I have a good set of sea legs. I have heard options from a Gin & Tonic and the Ear Patch to the injection which is supposed to put you out-for-the-count. Sturgeon has been recommended to me but last I heard, you can't get it in Australia.

#### What advice would you give to other people who want a job like yours?

Imagine your dream job. Ask yourself what the role expects of you & work hard to make it yours. If it doesn't exist, put your hand up, make it happen!

### Nicola's Cruise Favourites

**Ship:** I can't choose between my children.

**Ship Activity:** De-briefings from that day and briefings for the following day.

**Region:** Antarctica

**Shore excursion:** The Horizontal Falls in the Kimberley.

**Port:** Hobart

**Onboard food/drink:** Seven-course degustation on the *National Geographic Orion*.

**Perk of the job:** Matching clients with their perfect Micro-Cruise!

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