

SeaLink turns 25



SeaLink Managing Director Jeff Ellison.



SeaLink SA General Manager Donna Gauci.

Twenty five years ago SeaLink began, taking over the Philanderer III ferry service to Kangaroo Island.

Today, SeaLink Travel Group is a multi-million dollar, publicly-listed company owning businesses across Australia, including iconic Captain Cook Cruises on Sydney Harbour and on the Murray River, and it injects many millions of dollars into the Kangaroo Island community each year.

"In just 25 years our staff numbers have grown from 15 employees to over 600 and today we service more than three million passengers a year in Queensland, New South Wales, Northern Territory and South Australia," Managing Director Jeff Ellison said.

"What began as a one-ferry operation now includes a fleet of 26 commercial vessels and brands such as Captain Cook Cruises, Australian

Holiday Centre, Adelaide Sightseeing, Hop-On Hop-Off, Kangaroo Island Odysseys, Kangaroo Island Adventure Tours, Vivonne Bay Lodge, SeaLink Queensland and SeaLink Northern Territory.

"SeaLink is a South Australian success story and while our company continues to grow, Kangaroo Island has, and always will, play an important and central role in our operations."

Chairman of Tourism Kangaroo Island, Pierre Gregor, said there was no doubt that the professional and reliable service provided by SeaLink had contributed to the island's development.

"SeaLink's domestic and international marketing plus the holiday packaging has been pivotal in the growth of tourism on Kangaroo Island," Mr Gregor said.

"The positive direct and indirect

economic impacts on the island are reflected in part through the development of new tourism products and experiences and associated employment outcomes."

Mr Gregor also recognised SeaLink's encouragement and mentoring of tourism business related skills through the virtual tourism business program conducted at the Kingscote campus of Kangaroo Island Community Education.

"It is a great initiative that seeks to develop skills valuable to the industry which may also assist with some of the youth retention challenges facing the island," he said.

"The company's sponsorship support to a significant range of community clubs, associations and individuals also helps to demonstrate SeaLink's commitment to Kangaroo Island."

SeaLink SA General Manager

Donna Gauci said island communities needed a ferry service they could depend on and while other ferries had come and gone, SeaLink had stood the test of time.

"What began as a one-ferry operation on Kangaroo Island has been built up over time and that has given everyone ongoing security and certainty," Ms Gauci said.

"With a fleet of two modern ferries and millions of dollars invested in terminals at Penneshaw and Cape Jervis as well as land-based transportation including coaches and four wheel-drives, SeaLink continues to invest heavily in the future of Kangaroo Island."

"We're proud of what SeaLink has achieved over the past 25 years and look forward to many more decades of continued growth for the company."

Milestones

- ❑ **1989:** Philanderer ferry operation purchased from the March family by Malaysian company Mbf and renamed Kangaroo Island SeaLink
- ❑ **1991:** Purchased second ferry, the Island Navigator to operate fuel and freight services to/from KI
- ❑ **1996:** A group of South Australian investors and staff members purchased SeaLink from Mbf, returning it to local ownership
- ❑ **1998:** Launched luxury passenger and vehicle ferry Sealion 2000 built at a cost of \$9.1million
- ❑ **2000:** Adelaide Sightseeing Day Tours and City Centre Travel purchased
- ❑ **2003:** Australian Holiday Travel Centre in Melbourne and Sydney acquired
- ❑ **2004:** Launched second luxury passenger and vehicle ferry Spirit of KI built at a cost of \$14.3 million
- ❑ **2004:** Auckland, New Zealand based Subritzky Ferries purchased
- ❑ **2004:** The Ski Connection ski packaging and express coach transport company acquired
- ❑ **2005:** Purchased Vivonne Bay Outdoor Education Centre, renamed Vivonne Bay Lodge
- ❑ **2005:** \$2.4 million invested into building Cape Jervis Ferry Terminal



The Island Navigator ferry which Sealink purchased in 1991, to run the KI service and then it went to SeaLink NZ. SeaLink NZ has since been sold but the Island Navigator still operates to Great Barrier Island from Auckland.

- ❑ **2006:** Kangaroo Island Adventure Tours touring business purchased
- ❑ **2006:** Opened CJ's by the Sea cafe in the Cape Jervis ferry terminal
- ❑ **2006:** Launched 'FreightLink' NZ brand
- ❑ **2007:** Kangaroo Island Booking Centre retail specialist agency purchased
- ❑ **2007:** SeaLink selected as Facility Manager for the new Adelaide Central Bus Station
- ❑ **2007:** SkyLink Adelaide Airport Shuttle Service and fleet of coaches purchased
- ❑ **2007:** Phase One of \$1.2 million Vivonne Bay Eco Adventures redevelopment - built bistro and function centre
- ❑ **2008:** Big B Cartage Limited - NZ freight

From The Philanderer to tourism projects and inter-state operations

and trucking company, majority shareholder purchased

- ❑ **2009:** Premier Day Tour business purchased
- ❑ **2010:** Construction of \$1.2 million bus operations and maintenance facility in Penneshaw
- ❑ **2010:** Phase Two of Vivonne Bay Lodge redevelopment completed - accommodation, common room, dining, bar and deck
- ❑ **2010:** Kangaroo Island Odyssey 4x4 touring business purchased
- ❑ **2011:** Sunferries Townsville to Magnetic and Palm Island purchased - rebranded SeaLink Queensland
- ❑ **2011:** Captain Cook Cruises and Matilda Cruises, Sydney Harbour and Murray River Cruises purchased
- ❑ **2011:** Sold SeaLink New Zealand including the sale of majority shareholding in Big B Cartage Limited
- ❑ **2011:** SkyLink Adelaide Airport Shuttle Service sold
- ❑ **2013:** Over \$3 million invested in passenger ferries Sealion 2000 and Spirit of KI
- ❑ **2013:** SeaLink Travel Group listed on the ASX
- ❑ **2013:** Commenced ferry operations in Darwin to Tiwi Islands and Mandorah under SeaLink Northern Territory brand

- ❑ **2013 - 2014:** Construction and launch of four new vessels, Elizabeth Cook, Mary Reibey, Annabelle Rankin and Violet McKenzie for Captain Cook Cruises, Sydney Harbour
- ❑ **2013:** Purchased new passenger ferry James Grant for SeaLink Northern Territory
- ❑ **2013:** Purchased 'Freedom Sovereign' ferry (\$3.1m) (vessel name changed to 'Tiwi Mantari')
- ❑ **2014:** \$3.5 million invested into building new Penneshaw Ferry Terminal
- ❑ **2009-2014:** \$4 million invested on new touring coaches and vehicles
- ❑ **2014:** SeaLink Queensland signed 5 year contract to provide ferry services to Magnetic Island
- ❑ **2014:** SeaLink Queensland signed 5 year contract to provide ferry services to Palm Island, Queensland
- ❑ **2014:** Signed contract with the Northern Territory Government to provide ferry services to Tiwi Islands
- ❑ **2014:** Refurbishment of John Cadman 2 completed (\$1.7m)
- ❑ **2014:** Captain Cook Cruises signed contract to ferry passengers to the Biennale of Sydney Art Festival
- ❑ **2014:** Captain Cook Cruises awarded a 3 year charter contract with Harbour City Ferries

Servicing Kangaroo Island for 25 years.



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WINNER

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SEALINK



Dave and Jenny Clifford - Clifford's Honey Farm.

Tour a sweet success story

When Clifford's Honey Farm opened in December 1993, business owners Dave and Jenny Clifford welcomed self-drive visitors travelling on the SeaLink ferry to their farm gate shop and visitor centre.

In 1997, SeaLink began bringing visitors to the honey farm in bus groups and the farm's relationship with the SA-based company has flourished ever since.

"We were very honoured that SeaLink were keen to bring their visitors to our honey farm for tours," Jenny Clifford said.

"Local people, including many who have worked for SeaLink, have been key in word-of-mouth advertising, promoting the honey farm to visitors from far and wide."

Over the years the honey farm has shared its knowledge about what makes

“ What has been key is all the wonderful SeaLink staff, particularly the coach drivers ”

Kangaroo Island honey so special and the unique and rare Ligurian Honey Bees while Jenny has made her now famous honey ice-cream for the shop since opening day.

Jenny said from the beginning, a daily tour time slot was negotiated with SeaLink.

"What has been key is all the wonderful SeaLink staff, particularly the coach drivers," Jenny said.

"They have been fantastic promoting the farm's honey and in particular our

honey ice-cream so when groups arrive to the farm their mouths are already watering in anticipation."

Today, Clifford's Honey Farm welcomes a SeaLink coach daily and other special groups are regularly booked.

Jenny said she fondly remembered SeaLink promotional events, particularly one where local business owners travelled with SeaLink staff on the SeaLink ferry to Port Adelaide for an onboard Kangaroo Island presentation to agents.

Another fond memory was when the Honey Farm renovated its interpretive centre and Dave and Jenny asked then SeaLink coach driver Michael Clark to cut the ribbon.

"We've always enjoyed a great relationship with SeaLink and wish them every success as they celebrate their 25th year of service to KI," Ms Clifford said.



The Sealion 2000.

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KANGAROO ISLAND FOOTBALL LEAGUE

On behalf of its member clubs - Wisanger, Dudley United, Western Districts, Parndana and Kingscote - and the many people playing, officiating and participating in football, we take this opportunity to congratulate SeaLink and its people in celebrating 25 years of moving people and freight to and from Kangaroo Island, from the President, **Andrew (Aphid) Heinrich.**

VR2034604

Great gift idea

SeaLink Travel Gift Vouchers make a great Christmas gift.

SeaLink gift vouchers start from \$20 and can be redeemed against any product offered by the SeaLink Travel Group including ferry fares, accommodation, packages, tours, experiences and more.

Gift vouchers can be purchased online through a secure payment gateway and sent to you or directly to the recipient, and with no fare restrictions or block out dates applying, all the recipient has to do is to call 13 13 01 to redeem the value of the gift voucher.

Some of the great ideas available are:

- Two-day Self-Drive Package including return ferry with car and 1 night accommodation from \$214pp
- KI Farmers Market Tour and Cooking Class at Kangaroo Island Source from \$99pp
- Family ticket to the 'Birds of Prey In-Flight' Show at Raptor Domain \$50.

SeaLink Travel Group wins another award

Two-time Australian Tourism Award winner and South Australian Hall of Fame inductee, SeaLink, has won at the South Australian Tourism Awards following a four year absence from entering.

SeaLink received the award in the Major Tour and Transport category at the Awards ceremony recently, and also won a gold medal in the Adventure Tourism category for Kangaroo Island Adventure Tours, which attracts independent travellers looking for an authentic and adventurous KI experience.

SeaLink Managing Director Jeff Ellison said the wins reflected the hard work of SeaLink's South Australian team and its Board who had ensured that SeaLink remained at the forefront of tourism nationally.

"SeaLink has experienced an amazing period of growth over the past few years and we're proud that

a South Australian company which began with just one ferry service has grown into a major tourism and transport company that employs 600 people and transports more than three million guests every year," he said.

"We couldn't have wished for a better way to celebrate our 25th year of business success."

Mr Ellison said Kangaroo Island was Australia's must-see destination, famous for its wildlife, food and wine and stunning scenery and extremely popular with domestic and international visitors alike.

"There is so much to see and do on Kangaroo Island from getting up close and personal with Australian SeaLions, kangaroos, Tamar wallabies and koalas to wandering along pristine beaches, sampling local produce and wines and staying in romantic lighthouse accommodation along a wild coast," he said.



Kevin Howard - Kangaroo Island Sealink coach driver.

Part of SeaLink family

SeaLink is a family affair for the Howard clan.

Fourth generation islander Kevin Howard has been showing off his home to holidaymakers from around the globe for 14 years as a coach driver for Kangaroo Island SeaLink while his son Luke is the operations manager of Kangaroo Island Odysseys, owned by SeaLink.

Over the years Kevin's wife, Sandy, and his other son, Jimmy, have worked on the Island Navigator ferry. "Four out of five of us have worked with SeaLink and they've always been good to us," Mr Howard said.

"I really enjoy my job. I work in a luxury coach with 50 people who are

on holidays and having a good time that rubs off. It's almost a bit of a holiday for me every day too."

Kevin joined the company in 1999 at a time when the farming community was doing it tough. He was working on the breakwater at Penneshaw when one of the other coach drivers told him about a job going at SeaLink.

"I did three tours as an observer and three accompanied by an experienced driver. Then I was on my own," he said.

"Of course I was nervous.

"I'd spent most of my life on our family farm working with sheep and yelling at dogs and all of a sudden I was speaking to 30 to 50 people from

all over the world."

Kevin said the tours showed Kangaroo Island's main attractions such as Seal Bay, Remarkable Rocks and Admirals Arch but he also gets to tell guests about island life and the many diverse businesses that drive the economy.

"Most days on tour I would see members of my family and the local community I grew up with. Guests on board the bus are amused by my waving to everyone," he said.

"We always see wildlife from the coach and the stunning coastal scenery on the walks that we do. The island is a pretty special place to me." "No two tours are the same."



Kangaroo Island Bakery would like to congratulate SeaLink on 25 years of service to the Island.

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VR2034076



Tourism Kangaroo Island congratulates SEALINK for its fantastic achievement of 25 years of valuable transport and tourism services, to the Kangaroo Island Community.

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Our management and staff congratulate SeaLink on 25 years of tourism and transport to the local KI community



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THANKS SEALINK!



Experiencing the changes first-hand



Joylene Ingram loves working for SeaLink.

When Joylene Ingram and Theresa Cussans joined SeaLink, ferry tickets were still being written out by hand.

They've both seen the company grow from a one ferry operation into one of Australia's most significant tourism and transport companies and say they are proud to work for a South Australian success story.

"I spent six months working somewhere else but I came back," Theresa Cussans said.

She has been with SeaLink for 23 years, spending her first six months in Penneshaw before moving to Adelaide.

"It's like a big family here and I've been lucky enough to work in so many different areas of the company," she said.

"I've made snow holiday bookings for the Ski Connection, booked travel for in-

terstate guests to Clipsal 500 and organised accommodation along the Adelaide to Melbourne touring route.

"I've been to Falls Creek, stayed on the Great Ocean Road and of course spent plenty of time on Kangaroo Island, which is wonderful."

Theresa, who is Team Leader for the group's international, trade and retail areas, said plenty of opportunities to move around the company and experience different parts of the business had kept her interested.

"And I love working with the clients. I have people who have been phoning me since I first started and you become a part of their lives as well," she said.

Joylene is a familiar face on Kangaroo Island, working with the previous ferry operators for two years and then

staying on when SeaLink took over 25 years ago.

"It used to be nothing like now where there are multiple services a day," she said.

Joylene, who works in the Kingscote office and has lived on Kangaroo Island all her life, said she had met people from all over the world and had become used to "using her hands" when trying to communicate with people who understood little or no English.

"It's always interesting when someone wanders into the office and wants to know what they can see and do," she said.

"We always seem to work it out somehow."

"There are so many people from the island working for SeaLink now - it's a great place to work."



Theresa Cussans has travelled extensively to see other SeaLink-run operations.

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Connecting KI freight to the world



Mike Smith - Kangaroo Island Freight Operators.

Mike Smith, from Kangaroo Island Freight Operators, is one businessman who remembers carrying freight on the Troubridge and Island Seaway,

"The Troubridge used to take six hours and the Island Seaway took eight hours with just three services a week," Mr Smith said.

He always supported the short Penneshaw to Cape Jervis crossing over the longer Kingscote to Port Adelaide service, which was often cancelled due to bad weather.

"I remember pointing out at a meeting in Kingscote that I'd taken 3000 sheep out of Jamestown and had them home before my competitor could even get to Jamestown," he said.

"As a company, I think SeaLink has done a wonderful job and if reliability is what you go on, they have certainly been the most reliable and run a great schedule for Kangaroo Island."

CONGRATULATIONS SEALINK 25TH ANNIVERSARY
OF TOURISM AND TRANSPORT TO THE LOCAL KI COMMUNITY & 6 YEARS SERVICING KIPG AND KI GRAIN GROWERS

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The Islander

Breaking news
SeaLink 25

Congratulations to SeaLink and staff for 25 great years, from the editor and staff at *The Islander*.

KANGAROO ISLAND NETBALL ASSOCIATION

CONGRATULATIONS ON 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Kangaroo Island Netball Association would like to thank SeaLink for their generous sponsorship of netballers on Kangaroo Island

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Congratulations to SeaLink on 25 years of service. As new owners of Wanderers Rest, we look forward to working together in the future.

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VR2034164

The Seafront and Penneshaw Hotel wish to congratulate SeaLink on 25 years of tourism and transport services to Kangaroo Island and

we wish you all the success for the next 25 years.

VR2034138