START

**PORTLAND PORT’S NEW DESIGN PLAQUES A HIT WITH INAUGURAL CALLS**

The cruise season at Portland Port is well and truly underway with four ships already visiting throughout May and another to call before the month ends.

The Azores, Ryndam and Eurodam celebrated inaugural calls to Portland as they arrived at the beginning of May. To mark the first time they called into Portland they were presented with a plaque, but this year the port was keen to identify a more original and unique way to commemorate inaugural calls so commissioned the creation of five portland stone plaques to celebrate the five inaugural calls this year.

When presented to the captain of the ship the origin of the plaque is explained; they are quarried from Portland stone and sculpted by local craftsmen. Portland Sculpture and Quarry Trust were commissioned to produce the plaques, which have been gratefully received. Paul Crabtree, the sculptor who carved the plaques, commented; “This has been a very detailed project to work on and has made use of the great facilities at the Drill Hall Community Stone Workspace” at Easton Lane Portland. There’s also an exhibition space showcasing talents of artists and stone carvers with the opportunity to learn to carve stone.

 Ian McQuade, General Manager – Business Development, has been on board all three of the inaugural calls so far this summer; “We wanted to do something that was distinctly Portland in character and with these beautiful carved Portland Stone plaques I believe we have achieved this. It is clear from the comments from the ships that our offering is highly original and very much appreciated. Hopefully 2015 will see still more inaugural calls and a demand for more handcrafted Portland Plaques”

The stone plaques stand out when hung next to all the other plaques collected from the cruise ships travels around the world, perhaps no better testament to the Isle of Portland itself.

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***Notes to Editors:***

Previously a naval dockyard for over 150 years, Portland Harbour is now a thriving and successful commercial facility. It still maintains a close relationship with the past through its ongoing contract to support the RFA, as well as being home to the activities of Global Marine and Portland Bunkers International. It has almost 2,500 hectares of water at depths of up to 15m (C.D.); and provides vessel services from long term lay-ups to brief maintenance calls, luxury cruise liner docking facilities to industrial cargo shipments.

The cruise schedule for 2014 can be seen and downloaded here:

<http://www.portland-port.co.uk/cruise/cruise-calls>

The tariff and general Portland Harbour Authority information can be viewed at <http://www.portland-port.co.uk/>

M/F

Portland Port has over 2,000 metres of alongside berths and 11.6 metres (C.D.) depth of water at the deepest alongside berth.

Berthing for vessels up to 300 metres (subject to Harbour Master's approval).

11 designated anchorages are within the 1,015 hectare inner harbour. Six designated anchorages are within the 1,436 hectare Outer Harbour.

A width of 210 metres and depth of over 12.6 metres (C.D.) at the entrance of the harbour mean that there are few vessel beam, lock, or air draft restriction.

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