

## Landmark for cruises from Bristol Port as 25,000th passenger sets sail

A landmark 25,000th cruise passenger set sail from Bristol yesterday, marking a remarkable three years of booming demand from holidaymakers in the South West.

The port opened its cruise terminal in Avonmouth in 2013, offering voyages from Bristol for the first time in two decades. It is now the fastest growing region for cruises, with routes to more than 20 destinations around the world.

Bristol Port Company marked the milestone by presenting its 25,000th passenger, Bernadette Clark, with champagne and flowers as she boarded the MV Astoria. Passengers setting sail for The Scottish Islands and Faroes were also greeted at the terminal with bunting and decorations to mark the Queen's 90th birthday.

Bernadette, travelling with her companion Richard Lawson, is one of Bristol's most prolific cruisers, having spent 115 nights on board Cruise & Maritime Voyages cruise vessels over the past three years.

She said: "It was such a surprise to be chosen for such a special occasion. I knew it was the Queen's 90th Birthday and I thought that the Cruise Terminal was decorated to celebrate that special event. I did not realise it was for me as well!

"I love the convenience of the Bristol cruise terminal and I am thrilled and proud to be their 25,000th passenger."

The port has proven popular with holidaymakers in the South West and Wales who want a more convenient option than travelling to Southampton, London or Dover to depart.

This year will mark a double celebration, with the Bristol Port Company having purchased the port a quarter of a century ago from Bristol City Council. In a quarter of a century more than £475 million has been invested to create a modern, thriving business offering the full range of shipping, cruising distribution and logistics services. More events are planned to celebrate the 25th anniversary later in the year.

James Stangroom, Business Development Manager at Bristol Port, said: 'The Bristol Port Company only entered the world of cruise in 2013 and we are honoured to be embarking our 25,000th passenger. Everyone pulls together to ensure our passengers holiday gets off to the best possible start - from our hard working security and baggage handlers, to our World Host trained team of dedicated volunteers.'

Mike Hall from CMV said: 'Cruise & Maritime Voyages began cruising from Avonmouth three years ago offering convenient cruising holidays for the people of the South West. Avonmouth is now established as one of our most popular departure ports and we enjoy a very close working relationship with everyone there. We are delighted that the port's 25,000th passenger is one of our loyal customers who has sailed some 115 nights with CMV.'

Bristol Port's volunteers, otherwise known as Guest Experience Crew, all hold internationally recognised World Host badges. They were part of the surprise for Bernadette. Eddie Strong from Bristol, who has been volunteering since 2014, said: 'Bristol Port are brilliant at thinking of ways to surprise the passengers a little bit. There is always an air of excitement in the terminal and it's always wonderful to welcome many faces here, today was extra special when the passengers arrived and saw all the decorations and cut out's for the Queen's birthday celebrations - but seeing Bernadette's face as she realised she was the 25,000th

passenger was pure gold!’

– ENDS –

Note:

The Bristol Port Company was formed in 1991 when entrepreneurs Terence Mordaunt and David Ord purchased the Port of Bristol from Bristol City Council. Since privatisation over £475 million has been invested to create a modern, thriving business offering the full range of shipping, cruising distribution and logistics services.