

Eight years prison for Silversea theft

MARY Ann Abellanoza has been given an eight-year sentence in the NSW District Court, after being convicted of defrauding Silversea Cruises of \$3.7 million.

Abellanoza was the bookkeeper at Silversea's Australian office in Sydney from 2014 to 2018, with the court hearing she made 236 fraudulent payments into seven bank accounts over that period.

She pleaded guilty to four charges of "dishonestly obtaining a financial benefit by deception," as well as further charges of "dealing with the proceeds of crime" in relation to the laundering of the funds through poker machines.

The overall sentence included a five year non-parole period, with the judge taking her early guilty plea into account.

Although she was on an \$88,000 salary and entitled to a free Silversea luxury cruise each year,



Abellanoza's lawyers said she began to feel "undervalued" by the company as her workload increased.

The fraud was perpetrated by changing the payment details on legitimate invoices so that money from Silversea was directed into Abellanoza's accounts, rather than to the company's suppliers.

The lawyers claimed she began making the fake payments to herself as a means of proving that Silversea's systems were faulty and that more staff were needed.

However, Judge Culver noted a "degree of sophistication" in the scam, and also noted that a significant part of the stolen money remains unaccounted for.

"These crimes can cause financial devastation on a company, its clients, shareholders and have a great impact on other people working within the organisation," she said.

A Silversea spokesperson thanked authorities for "bringing the criminal proceedings to a just conclusion".

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features five pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from **Windstar Cruises**.

MSC new sales chief

LISA Teiotu has been appointed as MSC Cruises' Head of Sales for Australia and New Zealand.

The newly created role will see Teiotu responsible for the company's commercial development in the region, overseeing the teams looking after MSC's retail, wholesale and online travel agency business.

She joins MSC from Royal Caribbean Cruises, where she was most recently Head of Business Development for Australia and NZ.

Teiotu commences at MSC on Mon 18 Nov 2019.

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Ahoy there Aussies

DIGITAL charter platform Ahoy Club has introduced the 54 metre yacht *Mischief* to the Australian market this week.

The move follows an upswing in local demand for chartered super yachts according to Ahoy, adding that only a limited number of chartered yachts are available in Australia when compared to regions like the Mediterranean and Caribbean.

The introduction of the vessel follows the recent launch of a white-labelled platform for travel agents.

Ahoy said the new platform allows for a more streamlined booking process and also provides a commissionable rate for every yacht charter.

MEANWHILE Ahoy has purchased the 72m *Coral Ocean* which will sail the Mediterranean & Caribbean.

Marking 50 years of the Cup

P&O Cruises marked 50 years of cruising to the Melbourne Cup in style this week, with Australian model Fiona Falkiner (**pictured**) leading *Pacific Explorer's* "Fashions at Sea" event.

Joining Falkiner on board to entertain passengers was race calling royalty Greg Miles, two-time Melbourne Cup winning jockey John Letts, and the trainers of Cup winning horses, Brian Jenkins (Jezabeel in 1998) and Sheila Laxon (Ethereal in 2001).

The six-night cruise departed



Sydney on 31 Oct before guests arrived in Melbourne in time to watch the race that stops the nation - giddy-up!

Royal's ship battered by storms in the UK

ROYAL Caribbean's *Explorer of the Seas* has been forced to delay her arrival back in Southampton in the UK due to a major storm cell that recently impacted cruise conditions in western Europe.

The vessel was sailing towards the end of an 11-day Canaries voyage when Royal decided to take the evasive action.

"We determined this was the best decision to ensure the safety and comfort of our guests," Royal Caribbean UK posted on Twitter.

NCL explores LNG

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) President and CEO Harry Sommer confirmed the cruise line was in "active discussions" with shipyards about building LNG-powered ships.

Speaking on board *Norwegian Encore* last week, Sommer said NCL was talking to Meyer Werft and Fincantieri about exploring LNG for its classes of ships following orders of six Leonardo class vessels from Fincantieri.

"It's too soon for me to say anything because I don't know where those discussions are going to go, but I can absolutely confirm that [LNG] is front and centre as part of our agenda," Sommer said.

Norwegian Cruise Line will take delivery of its first Leonardo class ship in Jun 2022, to be followed by one ship every year until 2027.



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Want to know what a cruise on *Scenic Eclipse* is like? Read more in the November issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read
travelBulletin

Disney luvs crew 2

DISNEY Cruise Line has announced it is now providing free texting services for its crew aboard all of its ships.

"We recognise how important it is for our crew members to be able to stay in touch with their families and friends, and we're proud to provide this benefit," said Disney Cruise Line President Jeff Vahle.

Crew members with iOS and Android devices will be eligible to take advantage of the new complementary service.

Launching last week on *Disney Magic*, the initiative is a first for a major cruise line.

Saga adds river ship



UK-BASED Saga Holidays has revealed plans to launch a new-build boutique river cruise ship that will commence sailing European rivers from the northern spring of 2021.

The new river vessel, *Spirit of the Rhine* (render **pictured**), will feature 17m² cabins equipped with French balconies and floor-to-ceiling windows, and is scheduled to sail the Rhine, Moselle, Main and Danube rivers.

In terms of onboard facilities, the new ship will boast a large lounge and bar area, a main restaurant, library, large sundeck, jacuzzi, and gymnasium.

News of the upcoming *Spirit of the Rhine* follows the recent launch of Saga's boutique ocean cruise ship *Spirit of Discovery* in Jul of this year (**CW** 26 Jun).

"I am delighted to announce that we are using our experience

in ocean cruising to design a bespoke ship for those guests who want a luxurious, boutique river cruise experience," said Saga's CEO Robin Shaw.

"This launch...heralds a step change in the future of river cruising and when it comes to the onboard experience, our boutique approach to cruising will ensure that our guests have an experience that combines unrivalled, first class service with bespoke authentic experiences," she added.

Spirit of the Rhine will offer a mix of traditional and innovative itineraries, with popular destinations to be offered, as well as less familiar ports of call.

The new ship will be built by the Dutch-based Vahali, with bookings to open following the publication of its first itineraries on 02 Dec.

Glacier Bay cut

DESPITE being only one of 10 cruise lines chosen to make visits to the Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska, Royal Caribbean has opted to drop the destination from its list of 2020 itineraries.

Alaska's National Park Service confirmed the cruise line had elected not to finalise the agreement, meaning Royal will not be visiting the UNESCO-listed site until at least 2029, when the current deal expires.

"We know this may be disappointing to some, however, we still have several glacier adventures," a Royal spokesperson said.

Paul Gauguin 2021

PONANT-OWNED Paul Gauguin Cruises has released details of its Tahiti, French Polynesia and South Pacific itineraries for 2021.

The 12- and 13-night Fiji, Tonga, Cook & Society Islands sailings and a new 11-night Tuamotus & Society Islands itinerary are highlights of the program, the latter paying visit to the cruise line's private island Motu Mahana.

Voyages for the new sailing depart from Papeete on 23 Jan and 04 Dec 2021, and sail to Huahine, Motu Mahana, an overnight in Bora Bora, Rangiroa, Fakarava, a second Motu Mahana visit, & Moorea

Carnival for women

CARNIVAL Corporation has thrown its support behind the "Now Is the Moment - Be a Catalyst" campaign, an initiative that aims to raise US\$25 million towards accelerating the progress of women in the workplace.

Goals of the fundraising efforts include closing the gender pay gap & pushing for more women on boards.

"We are incredibly grateful to our campaign co-chairs and all the generous supporter organisations - including Carnival Corporation...giving Catalyst the foundation for a successful campaign," said Catalyst CEO Lorraine Hariton.

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Bhaya appoints new VP



THE parent company of Vietnamese cruise brand Bhaya Cruises, HG Holdings, has appointed of Jerri Povibool to the role of Vice President.

Povibool is an industry veteran who will be charged with sales, marketing and general operations duties at the company.

"I am very grateful to have an opportunity to be a part of Bhaya Cruises, a company that

has been providing unforgettable experiences to travellers on Ha Long Bay for over 12 years," Povibool said.

"We are looking forward to launching fresh, new products and services to welcome our guests in 2020," she added.

Povibool was previously VP Business Development & Marketing for An Lam Retreats.

Pictured: *Bhaya Legend*.

Dining afloat: Onda by Scarpetta



SHIP: Norwegian Cruise Line's (NCL) *Norwegian Encore*.

The newest NCL ship, *Norwegian Encore*, introduced the first Onda by Scarpetta at sea when the vessel embarked on its preview cruise last week (**CW** 30 Oct).

Brought to life under a collaboration with LDV Hospitality, the authentic Italian restaurant joins the Scarpetta portfolio's locations in New York, the Hamptons, Miami, Las Vegas, Philadelphia, Newport, and London.

Onda by Scarpetta offers a selection of raw and cooked seafood, such as Yellowtail Crudo, along with pastas made in-house daily including Scarpetta's famous Spaghetti

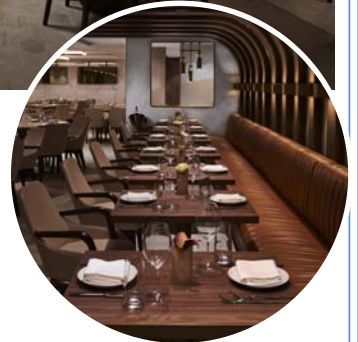
Tomato and Basil and Italian entrees and desserts.

The restaurant draws design inspiration from the land-based Scarpetta venues, bringing natural materials such as walnut and calacatta gold marble together to deliver a contemporary, minimalist, Italian aesthetic.

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Jamaica sunken city

JAMAICA will soon welcome cruises to the "sunken city" of Port Royal, which was made famous by *The Pirates of the Caribbean* film franchise.

Marella Cruises' *Marella Discovery 2* will be the first to visit the site in Jan, and is part of a plan for small vessels to offer round-Jamaica cruises.

Whisky me away Scenic



THE Whisky Bar available on board *Scenic Eclipse* boasts more than 110 varieties of the popular alcoholic beverage, referred to as "water of life" in Gaelic.

Guests at the bar can choose from a wide stock of single malt options including a 25-year-old Glendullan, a 30-year-old Jura The Loch and a 16-year-old Lagavulin.

The bar also offers a range of

blended whiskies such as Johnny Walker Blue, Ireland's Jameson Select Reserve Black Barrel, Canada's Crown Royal Deluxe, and an array of product from Australia, Japan, Taiwan, France, India, and South Africa.

The whiskies are available to pax as part of Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours' all inclusive policy.

Pictured: The Whisky Bar.



TALK about a river voyage that takes an eternity to reach its final destination.

A small iron boat that has been lodged in the rocks 600 metres from the edge of Niagara Falls for more than a century has finally moved as a result of severe weather.

According to Niagara Park officials, the iconic boat referred to as "Iron Scow", has been flipped on its side this week due to torrid weather conditions.

"We think it's about 50 metres down the river from its original location," said Senior Manager of Heritage for Niagara Parks Jim Hill.

The iron vessel looks to be secure for the moment, however authorities are suggesting if there's another similar weather event it is likely to move further along the river.

The Iron Scow broke loose from a tug on 06 Aug 1918, leaving two men stranded aboard until they were rescued the following day.

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CLIA UPDATE



with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

TOURISM Australia's latest campaign has ignited a robust discussion around the virtues of Australian "philosophy".

Whatever your take on the concept, it's an important initiative that will help encourage travel to Australia at a time when competitors worldwide are working hard.

But regardless of the marketing strategy, it's vital that we consider all types of tourism and provide adequate backing across all sector.

That includes cruise, and while it might seem obvious to those of us in the cruise industry, there is still a lack of understanding around the economic contribution that cruise tourism makes.

Fortunately, our latest annual economic assessment - jointly commissioned by CLIA and the Australian Cruise Association - dispels the myth that cruise ships come and go without leaving benefits.

Increased spending by cruise passengers has helped lift the total economic contribution of cruise tourism in Australia to \$5.2 billion in 2018-19.

Passengers' direct spending now averages \$387 per person for every day they're on shore.

For international visitors in a home port, the average increases to \$569 per day.

This helps create employment for more than 18,000 people around the country, so the value of cruising should be clear.

You can find out more in our report, or **CLICK HERE** for an infographic.





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