

## **PRESS RELEASE – 15<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2008**

THE ILT Foundation is doing its bit to make sure the lights will soon be shining brightly on a significant piece of Invercargill's maritime history.

A replica 1900s fishing cutter boat, which sits on the reserve next to the Stead Street wharf by the estuary, will soon have lights installed around it to improve and protect the display and boardwalk. The ILT Foundation has approved a grant of \$10,000 for the provision of lights, but that funding follows an original \$32,000 contribution it made last year to construct the concrete-laden replica vessel.

Invercargill City Council parks manager, Robin Pagan, a project manager for the display, said the ILT Foundation's total funding contribution of \$42,000 showed how much it recognised the historical importance of the fishing cutter to the region. The boats were a common sight in the Invercargill estuary and along Southland coastlines from about the 1890s to the 1940s when they were used for fishing, oystering and carrying cargo and farm produce.

"Sometimes with something old and historic you have to lock it up and can't touch it, but because this is scaled to replica, and is made out of robust material, it's also useable," Mr Pagan said. "People can stand on it and touch it and so on. It's very much a hands-on thing. There's always lots of people there looking around it and it has also become quite a favourite spot for people to get wedding photos taken."

Mr Pagan hoped the lights would be installed sometime next month and he thought it would add to the display at night, especially for passing airport traffic.

ILT Foundation chairman, Alan Dennis, said it was important to have lights to further highlight and promote the replica vessel, which was named Southern Light to reflect Invercargill's identity as the city of water and light,

"It's scaled exactly the same as the fishing cutters that were first seen here over 100 years ago when the Invercargill estuary was the main port," Mr Dennis said.

"So to remember the vessel, and its significance to Invercargill and Southland, is very important. The popular, family-friendly display at Stead Street certainly does that."

**ENDS**