

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Orion Expedition Cruises

10th January, 2008

Watam village

Orion receives gifts of thanks from remote PNG village

On Orion's final visit for the year to Watam Village, situated near the mouth of the legendary Sepik River in Papua New Guinea, the "council of chiefs" representing all the village clans surprised Orion crew and guests with a totally unexpected speech and presentation.

Orion's Expedition Cruise Program Coordinator Justin Friend tells us in this presentation the chiefs expressed their absolute delight as to how much Orion's visits have changed their lives in a positive way. Whilst they acknowledged the financial payments and the opportunities to sell their artifacts, they were particularly thankful for all the donations from Orion and her guests noting that the aid post and school virtually survive on donation deliveries alone.

In return the community wanted to express their gratitude, responding by presenting gifts for Orion management team and staff. Every family in the community "donated" something to Orion.

Significantly, Orion was also presented with a sacred ancestral spirit figure for the office in Sydney. In traditional folk lore the carving is an actual deceased ancestor's spirit so this is an important piece. Entrusting the care of this spirit figure signifies the bond between Orion and the people of Watam.

Ranked #2 expedition cruise ship in the world in the current Berlitz Cruise Guide, Orion is Australia's only purpose-built luxury expedition cruise ship, featuring an unmatched range of onboard facilities.

With 75 crew and a maximum of just 106 passengers Orion offers the highest staff to guest ratio and guest to public space ratio of any ship based in Australian waters.

Further information on Orion Expedition Cruises can be obtained by visiting the website www.orioncruises.com.au

For reservations or to obtain a brochure call Orion Expedition Cruises: 61-2 9033 8777 (Sydney callers) 1300 361 012 (regional and interstate) or your travel agent. Email: info@orioncruises.com.au



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