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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**February 20, 2018**

### **PORT ALBERNI TO HOST CRUISE SHIPS AGAIN IN 2019**

The Port Alberni Port Authority (PAPA) and West Coast Agencies is proud to announce the return of cruise ships to Port Alberni in 2019.

Currently, Holland America Line (HAL) is scheduled to return to Port Alberni May 25, June 15 and July 6 of 2019. Port Alberni last hosted a cruise ship in May 2013; also a HAL vessel. While feedback from passengers, crew and the company itself was extremely positive about their experience with Port Alberni market conditions did not allow for a return since then. However, the Port, in partnership with the City of Port Alberni, remained connected to the company and within the industry to keep our community known as welcoming and a great cruise destination.

Steve Hnatko, General Manager of Cruise Operations for West Coast Agencies sees great growth opportunity for the cruise business in Port Alberni. "Port Alberni's experience hosting cruise ships and cruise passengers from other destinations, such as Nanaimo, is very well-known and highly regarded in the industry. Passengers are once again seeking new destinations that offer a warm welcome and a unique, authentic experience. Port Alberni stands out as this type of destination."

The Port and City have partnered in the past to work with the community to show off its heritage and culture to cruise passengers. "We believe that, as a community, we continue to grow and evolve and we are looking at working with First Nations, Chamber of Commerce, local industry and marine enhancement groups, the Heritage Network, etc to develop potential new shore excursions that can educate and entertain cruise passengers about what our community does very well," outlines PAPA Director of Public Relations and Business Development, Dave McCormick. The City's Economic Development Manager, Pat Deakin, emphasizes that, "as partnering organizations and as a community we have never given up on the cruise industry as we steadfastly believe in the potential of the cruise ship industry in the Alberni Valley. We remained confident that we have a unique offer that is attractive to visitors. We continue to rise to the top of different desirable destination lists, such as the recent *Best Places For Millennials To Visit*. We look forward to working with the many different groups in the community to do what we do best – be the warm, welcoming hosts who create lasting, positive memories!"

**Canada**

*Inlet Port on the Pacific*

*to Cruise and Discover*

*Canada's*

*Yours*

Planning is currently in the early stages and there will be much work to do. More information will be shared as it becomes available. In the meantime, please join us is looking forward to providing the best cruise passenger experience on the west coast!

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