

All on board for science

FREE tours around the country's most impressive floating laboratory will be held at Stokes Hill Wharf today.

Marine National Facility research vessel *Southern Surveyor* has just docked on Australian soil after a research project in East Timor.

Oceanographer Bernadette Sloyan said she had collected data from two moorings to find out how the Indonesian Throughflow current affects Australia's climate.

"We've been working on it since 2010," she said.

Captain John Barr has worked at sea for 28 years and spent the past five on board the *Southern Surveyor*.

He said it was different to other nautical jobs.

"Cargo is very much about getting from A to B but this is all about the science on the way," he said.

"The scientists are the clients. They're very focused on what they do."

He said the ship had a range of gadgets not found on a regular ship including a sonar radar system and a weather station.

"For a small ship there's a hell of a lot of gear on board," he said.

"She's always monitoring something and sending out data."

The tours are open to people over 10 years of age and closed toe shoes are a must.

Tours run every half hour from 9am-3pm.



Mathew Piamnok, from Tiwi, listens to oceanographer Bernadette Sloyan explain her recent project on board the *Southern Surveyor*. The CSIRO research ship is docked in Darwin and taking people on board for tours

Picture: PATRINA MALONE