

The Master's Mariner

September, 2013



From Sussex St to 24 Hickson Rd

On 1st August 2012 The Mission to Seafarers, Sydney officially vacated 320-324 Sussex Street, our base for more than twenty years.



A 180° view of the 'gutted' Sussex St interior – taken from the remains of the PC's Office.

On 14th January 2013, after a lot of hard work amidst a continuing (albeit 'homeless') ministry to seafarers, we finally occupied our new premises and opened our doors to seafarers.

The first seafarer to be welcomed into our new Centre was Gregorio Ballesteros from 'Diamond Princess'. Although we weren't officially open at the time, our Internet was up and running (despite the notification on the screen!) and we just couldn't say 'no' to such a smiling face!



Although Gregorio may lay claim to be 'Visitor #1', our first official visitors were crew from 'British Liberty' and 'MSC Regina' who gave the new Centre a big 'thumbs up'.

During our period of 'homelessness' were unable to offer seafarers the full scope of services to which they had been used and this was of real concern to us. We were pleased to be able to maintain crucial elements of our ministry (crew visiting, free transport to and from the city) but just as 'there's no place like home', so 'there's no place like a home away from home' either.

Imagine, therefore, our delight when we were informed that we had been nominated (by an unknown seafarer) for the 'Seafarer Centre of the Year' Award from the International Centre for Seafarer Welfare! This delight was increased when, soon afterwards, we were informed that we were one of the five Centres to be short-listed!



Being presented with a Runner's Up Certificate from Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation, Mr Koji Sekimizu.

Although the Port Everglades Seafarer Centre in Florida won the Award, it was a great honour to be a runner-up and to know that seafarers themselves had nominated us! In the midst of a year of uncertainty and upheaval, it was a wonderful tribute to our Chaplains, who maintained an outstanding level of commitment and care to the seafarers whom, daily, we welcome to Sydney.

MtS Australia was well represented at the Awards - Fremantle MtS was a runner-up in the Centre of the Year Award and its Chaplain The Rev. Dennis Claughton was a joint winner of the Personality of the Year Award, with The Rev. Noah Park of Geelong MtS a runner-up in the same award.

During our time of transition, Sydney Ports Corporation had, very generously, provided me with a desk from which to work. It was an ideal location as I was only a short distance from our new 'digs' and was able to meet regularly and easily with the Bethel Union, Architect, Project Manager and others as the planning and fitting-out took place.

Our new Centre is on the ground floor of 24 Hickson Road, Millers Point – just west of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It is a former Wool Bond Store and has a very distinctive heritage atmosphere evidenced by the numerous hardwood columns, a wool bale-lift and other relics from the late 1800s. The character of the building matches well the magnificent models of 'Cutty Sark', 'Kirkcudbrightshire' and 'Brilliant' on display.

However, modern seafarers are rarely heritage-conscious; for them we have two large-screen TVs, a Nintendo Wii, five iMac computers with Skype and there is WiFi for those with their own laptops. These complement the popular 'power-cut immune' facilities of table tennis, table soccer and 'pool' – not omitting our library of books.

We are very grateful to the Sydney Bethel Union (SBU) for their unflinching support of our ministry, to the Australian Mariners Welfare Society (AMWS) for their generous donation



towards a custom-made computer table and to the Merchant Navy Association for their donation towards the cost of lounge chairs for seafarers. The Nautical Institute also funded the cost of a second large-screen (games) TV for seafarers. Thank you to all our supporters!

Toshihiro Yano



It is with genuine sadness that I must let you know that, after nearly thirty-four years service, Toshi has decided to retire.

I asked Toshi how he came to live in Australia.

"After I finished university, I wanted to make films like Akira Kurasowa, however I always struggled with my limited talent, sponsors, money, etc. I wanted to find something new in order to make a success of myself, so I decided to go overseas. The U.S.A and Europe were well-known among Japanese but, in 1974, Australia was still an 'unknown' country for Japanese, so I wanted to 'discover' Australia before others did. Here, I met with many wonderful people. When I travelled in Tasmania, I happened to meet a Baptist Minister (who was almost blind) and his wife. They did not have any children and they looked after me like their own son. I met with many faithful Christians through him and learned many important things from them. I felt that Australia was the country where I would have a future."

How did you come to work at the Mission?

When I came to Australia in 1974, I was not a seafarer. However, I often visited The Mission and talked with many seafarers from around the world. In those days, many Japanese seafarers came to Sydney and MtS needed at least two Japanese staff - a Chaplain and someone who would help him. In 1979, when I returned to Sydney, the Japanese helper had left MtS and they asked me to replace him.

What did your work involve?

In 1982, Port Botany was officially opened and The Mission was asked to provide a return Bus Service for seafarers from morning to midnight. On that time, Port Botany was very isolated and inconvenient for transport.

I lived near The Mission and around that time a new bus was donated by one of my relatives who was the Director of a Japanese ship-building

industry Foundation. (The then) Senior Chaplain Rev. Owen Dykes thought I was the most suitable person to look after the ministry at Port Botany and I was happy to accept his offer. At that time, most ships were still berthing in Sydney Harbour so I would transport and visit crews at Pt Botany.

What's been the most frustrating aspect of your work?

When I'd be in a hurry to get to the Mission or to Port Botany and be caught in a traffic Jam.

... and the most enjoyable aspect?

When I see seafarers' happy faces because of our ministry to them.

Would you tell us about your family?

I am married to my darling wife Keiko, to whom God has joined me. We met at The Missions to Seamen in Macquarie Place - they had a lodge in which she was living. We have a son, Udaijin (which means 'aristocratic prime minister' in old Japanese).

When Uda was at Scots College, he became one of their soccer stars and wanted to become a famous soccer player. Although the odds were against him and his parents would have preferred him to have other ambitions, he would not be dissuaded. He has a day job but his evenings are devoted to soccer. He works very hard, so we can't complain!

How do you like to relax?



We love animals very much. We look after a fierce, wild dog called 'Sootie' (left) and horses. When we are with our family animals, I feel happy and relaxed. When I see their honest eyes, sometimes I feel that my unclean spirit is washed

away by their innocent eyes. (Toshi is being poetic - he knows the truth of Psalm 51:10!)

Where is your perfect holiday destination?

Peru!! I am very interested in the ancient Maya and Inca cultures, and learned Spanish because of my interest in Peru. I'd love to communicate with the original Indio people to know their history and see their lifestyles. I also like to listen to Peruvian music!

Toshi's decision to retire was due to health concerns. Please pray for him and Keiko that they would face the future with a secure confidence in Jesus Christ's saving work for them. We hope that Toshi may soon be well enough to return to The Mission on an occasional basis.

Although we always knew that Toshi was 'irreplaceable', his retirement has had a significant impact upon our ministry capabilities – for we cannot afford to employ a 'replacement' Chaplain.

The hard reality is that our reduced staffing levels meant that we are no longer able to maintain the levels of service that we had previously provided for the seafarers.

Consequently, we reduced the number of trips to and from the Ports from 5 to 4 each day and we reduced our opening hours from 1pm to 2pm.

Nevertheless, we still open up for seafarers who happen to knock on our door before 2pm. It's no trouble to allow them to use the computers before our official opening time, although some other facilities (e.g. cash exchange) are unavailable before 2pm.

The Maritime Labour Convention 2006

The International Labour Organisation's Maritime Labour Convention 2006 provides comprehensive rights and protection at work for the world's 1.2 million+ seafarers. The Convention aims to achieve decent work for seafarers and secure economic interests in fair competition for quality shipowners. As about 90% of world trade is carried on ships, seafarers are essential to international trade and the international economic and trade system. The new labour standard consolidates and updates more than 68 international labour standards related to the Maritime sector adopted over the last 80 years.

The Convention sets out seafarers' rights to decent conditions of work on a wide range of subjects, and aims to be globally applicable, easily understandable, readily updatable and uniformly enforced. It has been designed to become a global instrument known as the 'fourth pillar' of the international regulatory regime for quality shipping, complementing the key Conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The decision by the ILO to move forward to create this major new Maritime Labour Convention was the result of a joint resolution in 2001 by the international seafarers' and ship owners' organisations, also supported by governments. They pointed out that the shipping industry is 'the world's first genuinely global industry' which 'requires an international regulatory response of an appropriate kind – global standards applicable to the entire industry'.

To come into force, the MLC had to be ratified by at least 30 member States with a total share of 33% of gross tonnage of the world's ships. This milestone was reached on 20 August 2012. Consequently, the MLC will come into force - globally - on 20 August 2013.

Mark Appleton

Many will remember 10th January 2013 as 'the day it was 46°C'. The day should be remembered, however, for a much more significant reason – it is the day that Mark Francis Appleton, '*Late of Winmalee. Devoted father of Joy, Amy, Bonnie and Christian. Adored Poppy of Lana. Loved father-in-law, son, brother, uncle and friend. Aged 61 years.*' died.

Mark was a very wise, gentle and gracious man. He had known much suffering in his life but, in the Lord's mercies to him, these anguishes had left a legacy of humility and deep gratitude for the blessings in life that we so often take for granted.

Consequently, was very sensitive to the needs of others. Although his life experiences could have made him angry and bitter, the Lord used them to enable Mark to have a ministry of loving empathy with others who were also in pain.

Paul the Apostle wrote to the congregation in Corinth, '*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*' (2Cor. 1:3,4). This was the ministry model Mark followed.

There were times when the frustrations of Mark's injuries and situation built up and he needed a release. It was a great compliment to us that his children would then say to him, '*Dad, why don't you just go The Mission!!*'. Here he felt a sense of calm and could engage in quiet activities that not only benefitted the staff and the seafarers but which also soothed his inner being, enabling him to return home calmed and contented, knowing that he'd been doing something very good.

For many years Mark's health had been declining, so much so that he was no longer able to come down to us as he used to do. Still, he taught Scripture at the local school for as long as he was able. However, his health declined to the point where he was unable to continue teaching the children whom he loved.

He still delighted in his family and, especially, in his granddaughter Lara. He loved them deeply.

Although it's some years since Mark's family sent him down to 'The Mission', Mark continues to be greatly missed, not just by us, but by everyone.

Joan Fyffe

On Thursday, 4th April, I rang Joan at home to see how she was feeling. She'd been slightly unwell for a time and I was concerned that, despite her



health, she might still want to come into The Mission as usual on Thursday nights. Indeed, she was keen to do so and I had to say to her that I'd much rather her stay at home and get better than to struggle into the Mission and do her recovery no good at all.

It was the last time I spoke with her as, the following night, she had a fall at home and was admitted to hospital. She died in her sleep in the early hours of Saturday 6th April 2013 and, with her death, also ended an era in the Mission to Seafarer's Sydney history.

Joan was born in Bolton, England on 4th May 19XX. Despite (or perhaps, because of!) the fact that each of her parents were one of nine children, Joan was an only child. She did, however, have cousins in number akin to 'the children of Israel'!

When Joan was two, her family moved to NZ.

After leaving school, Joan worked as medical secretary, then at Auckland Mental Hospital as a psychiatric social worker (which probably developed her great gift of understanding and talking & listening to people, even those who were not MtS Chaplains!)

In 1941, Joan was introduced to The Missions to Seamen. She quickly became involved in all the fund-raising and social activities - dances, picnic, suppers etc. that we part of the scene in those days.

In 1950, a Scottish seafarer named Will Fyffe happened to wander into the MtS in Napier. Thereafter, he never 'happened to wander' in there again! After a courtship across the seas Joan and Will married in Auckland on 16th May 1955. In 1957 they 'crossed the ditch' to Sydney and settled in Lane Cove.

In Sydney, Joan's volunteer heart found many ways to express itself. Joan became involved with MtS Sydney. She was the only person to have

served at each of the Mission's locations in Sydney - from helping at functions and fund raisers at 100 George St, through to Macquarie Place, the Kent St locations, 320 Sussex St., and here at 24 Hickson Rd. Always in the background, she was a model of quiet servant-hood at functions - making tea and baking endless pikelets, cakes & biscuits. Her jams were 'to die for'!

After Jane's birth, Joan cheerfully did all kinds of voluntary work - from helping at school functions, with Brownies & Guides, driving weekend Rangers netball teams, to Meals on Wheels for Willoughby council for over twenty-five years.

My predecessor (The Rev. Tom Hill) and I each tried to nominate her for an AO or similar, but she'd never co-operate! I think she much preferred to know that she was loved and valued by people whom she knew instead of seeking an award made by people whom she'd never met. To my mind, though, she was far more deserving of recognition because of her 'servant heart' that abhorred self-promotion. It somehow seems wrong that such people are overlooked in favour of some others whose awards are the result of endeavours that have brought themselves great personal gains.

A case in point was her involvement in the Harbour Lights Guild, in which she served as Secretary/Treasurer for over 30 years until it disbanded a couple of years ago.

These 'external' ministries never compromised her chief priorities as wife and mother. As the impact of Parkinson's disease on Will steadily increased, the tenderness of Joan's care for him enabled his death (in 2001) to be one of peace.

Her qualities as a mother were also seen in the closeness of her relationship with Jane. The Prophet Hosea exhorted the Israelites, 'Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love;' Joan's 'reaping' was a consequence of her 'sowing'.

Seafarers, some of whom might otherwise have been 'difficult' were also 'quietened' when served by Joan. In her they recognised a gracious older woman who cared for them, whoever they were. We often used to joke that the seafarers would ask if Joan was on duty that night, and come in if she was! But this was not just a joke - whenever Joan was on duty, our attendance



figures showed a definite increase over other days! We called it 'the Joan factor' and she was quietly chuffed when we showed her the figures, although she insisted that it was 'all nonsense'!



It would be a very, very difficult task to overestimate Joan's impact upon The Mission in Sydney. Although her impact was not in the form of governance or policy, her example of quiet, consistent, committed

servant-hood was a foundation into which policy and governance are most securely anchored.

Despite knowing that Joan had died and having attended her funeral, a note of unreality still persisted - and did so for quite some time. We still half-expected Joan to come in as usual on Thursday afternoons and, although we knew she would be coming in, we still glanced at the door with some form of 'could we be wrong?' hopefulness.

We even had cake 'for her' on her birthday. Somehow, it felt right to do so for someone who'd done so much for us.

Joan's memory will endure for a long, long time and will always be a cause for thanksgiving and warmed hearts.

THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS, SYDNEY

ABN 59 000 652 479

Street & Postal Address:

24 Hickson Rd, Millers Point, NSW 2000

Telephone: +61 (0) 2 9241 3009

Fax: +61 (0) 2 9247 0410

Email: sydney@mts.org.au

Global Website: www.missiontoseafarers.org

Direct Debits:

(General A/C) BSB 062 074 Account 1000 8038

(Welfare A/C) BSB 062 074 Account 1000 8062

Donations over \$2 to the Welfare Fund are tax-deductible.

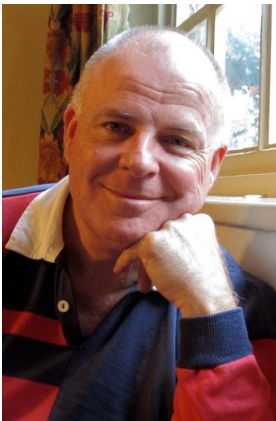
'For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.'

Ephesians 2:8-9.

The Mission to Seafarers, Sydney

Open Day

Wednesday, 9th October
11:00 am - 6:00 pm



On behalf of our tremendous team of Chaplains, I want to invite you - as a faithful supporter of our ministry - to experience our new Ministry Centre located on the Ground Floor of 24 Hickson Road, Millers Point.

Here you will see for yourself the facilities and features that prompted The Rev. Andrew Wright - MtS Secretary-General - to declare our Centre the best he's ever seen.

Although our ministry is much more important than our Centre, it is still a key component in enabling our ministry to be as effective as it is.

You may prefer to visit us in the morning, before we are officially open, but the real 'action' in the Centre may be seen after 2:30pm, when seafarers arrive on our first bus run of the day. Then you will see how our day usually unfolds and how your support is used to care for the ten thousand seafarers who visit us each year.

We plan to operate a free Mission bus shuttle between Wynyard Station (York St) and The Mission, leaving Wynyard on the hour from 11:00am to 4:00pm and The Mission on the half hour from 11:30am to 5:30pm.

If you would like to visit us on 9th October, please let me know asap so that we may be able to make your visit as rewarding as possible.

With warm best wishes,

Ian Porter