



The Master's Mariner

September, 2015.

Welcome, Davo!



Ian Porter

Since the retirement, in December 2014, of Chaplain Jong Nam Jo, we found it impossible to maintain the quantity and quality of our previous levels of ministry – esp. when a staff member took Annual Leave.

This was very stressful situation, as the Mission's credibility is largely dependent upon the quantity and quality of our ministry.

Previously, when our finances have been 'very tight', we have regularly been humbled by the LORD's wonderful provisions, made via your donations.

Because the LORD has constantly proven Himself to be faithful, we were encouraged to take a step of faith and employ a 4-days per week Chaplain.

The successful candidate was The Rev. David Davies. 'Davo' (as he likes to be known) is married to Neridah and they have two adult sons. Davo came to us in June 2015 and is, already, a great blessing. His ministry background includes twenty-five years in Parish and Missionary Society ministries in the Dioceses of Armidale and Sydney. Before that, ten years as an Electronics and Computers Service Engineer.

His ministry model is based on Acts 6:4, '*We will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word.*'

Davo is active in the Parish of Hornsby Heights, where he plays significant roles in their preaching, music and evangelism ministries. He also enjoys playing and refereeing Soccer.

What was it like for Davo to begin a ministry with The Mission to Seafarers? Read on

What a Life...

David Davies

I found myself asking, '*What does it take to become a Mission to Seafarers Chaplain?*'

For me, the first step was one over which I had no control. My father had served as a Merchant Seaman, some of which was during the Second World War. Although his seafaring days were over before I came along, his stories of visiting far off countries, and the stirring beauty of the ocean's moods captured my imagination as a child.

The second step was also one over which I had no control. I had been raised in a Roman Catholic family and, although I had rebelled against Catholicism in my teens, and thought that I had left God behind, He had other thoughts on the subject! On Christmas Day in 1988 I finally gave up fighting against the inevitable and gave my life to the Lord who had died to save me.

Mine had been a long battle, and I had struggled to the end, but: when I realised that all of my friends who I really respected were Christians; when I had been tricked by my workmates into reading John's Gospel over and over again; when I had been prayed for; when I been invited to Men's Breakfasts - I finally realised where I stood without Jesus and understood that he had worked everything in order to bring me to that day, when, at the ripe old age of 28 years, I would give my life over to him.

The third step also felt like one over which I had no control ... So, what is the first thing a 28 year-old single man should do after becoming a Christian? For me the answer was obvious - I enrolled at Bible College, so that I could learn what it was that God's word would tell what He had in store for my life.

I hope that you can sense that there's a common theme recurring here! Anyway, one of the questions I was asked during my interview for the position of Chaplain at

Mission to Seafarers was: ‘*Why did I want to come and work for them? Did I have what it took to become a Chaplain at The Mission to Seafarers?*’

‘*Honestly,*’ I replied, ‘*I have given up trying to control my life. I will know that God wants me to work with MtS if I get the job. Now, here I am. And I am wondering how God will use me while I am here.*’

The New York Times

One morning I received an email from Mr Ian Urban, an investigative journalist with the New York Times. He was doing a series of articles collectively called ‘The Outlaw Ocean’ and asked if I might have any resources that might help him in his investigation of illegalities on the high seas.

Ian’s series was published in the NYT and, although he gave me permission to reprint them in ‘The Master’s Mariner’, their contents were way beyond our humble space limits. Consequently, I have incorporated a link to the New York Times’ website where they may be viewed online:

http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/07/24/world/the-outlaw-ocean.html?_r=0

The series is made up of four parts:

PART 1: STOWAWAYS AND CRIMES ABOARD A SCOFFLAW SHIP

Few places on Earth are as free from legal oversight as the high seas. One ship has been among the most persistent offenders.

PART 2: MURDER AT SEA: CAPTURED ON VIDEO, BUT KILLERS GO FREE

A video shows at least four unarmed men being gunned down in the water. Despite dozens of witnesses, the killings went unreported and remain a mystery.

PART 3: ‘SEA SLAVES’: THE HUMAN MISERY THAT FEEDS PETS AND LIVESTOCK

Men who have fled servitude on fishing boats recount beatings and worse as nets are cast for the catch that will become pet food and livestock feed.

PART 4: A RENEGADE TRAWLER, HUNTED FOR 10,000 MILES BY VIGILANTES

For 110 days and across two seas and three oceans, crews stalked a fugitive fishing ship considered the world’s most notorious poacher.

If you have internet access you will, almost certainly, find ‘The Outlaw Ocean’ to be an enthralling and disturbing window into what can happen on the high sea.

Capt. Jack Sparrow Starmans



God never gives up on humanity; He keeps reaching out. The amazing thing is that He chooses to use people like

me (and of course, you who are reading this) as His ambassadors for the Gospel. This is because His power and glory are more clearly seen when He uses ‘cracked vessels’ like me (and ‘cracked vessels’ like you)!



And so, again, I am able to testify to God’s continuing mercies in using this ‘cracked vessel’ to help to fulfil His purposes.

Just last week, I spoke to three people on one ship. Two were believers, I was able to encourage them to meet together, and encourage each other. Seafarers, who are believers, really miss out on fellowship. If you don’t fan the flame of faith with regular fellowship, it may not maintain its vigour. I don’t meet too many believers on the ships.

There’s a saying: ‘*Religion is man’s answer to God; Jesus is God’s answer to religion.*’ Many seafarers are deeply religious, vainly trying to earn God’s acceptance on the basis of their own efforts; very few know the wonderful freedom that comes from embracing the forgiveness and acceptance that the Lord Jesus has won for them.

The third was a First Officer, who came from an island near Denmark. He was gently

spoken, but like his namesake, Thomas, he doubted the good news about Jesus. He had many questions, but said he'd heard all the answers before. In the end he took a 'Daily Bread' booklet, and, hopefully, the Lord will move him to read it. I don't always get the chance to encourage believers, and challenge an unbeliever, while on the one ship.

I never know what to expect when I visit a ship. When the Terminal bus driver drops me at the ship, he asks me, 'How long will you be?' I always answer, 'Anywhere from ten minutes to an hour'. Sometimes there's no one to talk to - they're either busy working, or on shore leave, or in their cabins trying to sleep. If so, I drop off some of 'The Sea' magazines and bus timetables, and leave. At other times I might spend up to an hour talking about their families and sharing the Good news of Jesus. There's never a dull moment as a Chaplain for Mission to Seafarers!

I look forward to reporting to you again in the next issue.

George Aboard



One of the hallmarks of The Mission to Seafarers' ministry is visiting different crews on board their vessels. It offers unique opportunities for chaplains to meet

seafarers visiting Sydney for the first time, and to 'welcome back' returning seafarers.

Recently I went on board a vessel and spent time with the 2nd Officer, who is from Ghana. He asked me if we had Wi-Fi and 'Skype' at our Centre because, like almost all seafarers, he was desperate to see and to speak with his wife and young daughter.

I drove him to our Mission Centre and, within a few minutes, he was on 'Skype' speaking with his wife. With teary eyes, he told me his daughter was crying and asking why he couldn't hug her on his lap and why was he hiding inside a box? The depth of his emotions at being able to speak with his wife and daughter and to know that they are well was such that he decided to resign from his job

in order to be with them until his daughter gets older.

We also have opportunities to meet seafarers who are signing off - like one Filipino Captain whom (Chaplain) Davo and I met in the mess room as his crew assembled to farewell him. We had a time of prayer for him, asking the LORD to grant him a safe journey home, for a happy family reunion and for a smooth adjustment for all into a new 'family dynamic' after he arrives home.

Occasionally we visit crews whose voyage will take them through dangerous waters. Recently, Tim (a student at Sydney Missionary & Bible College) & I visited a Tanker shortly before it sailed for Angola, South Africa, via the Indian Ocean. Knowing that those waters are home to many pirates, the crew were glad to enjoy Christian fellowship and prayer with us, asking the LORD to 'steer our ship' for a safe voyage. The Chief Mate was a little more fatalistic, however, and said, 'What can we do, it is a job we have to do to feed our families. Thanks for the prayer.'

When we meet the guard at the top of the gangway, the Officers in the Control Room, or the crew in the mess hall, the first question is always, 'Do you have phone cards (SIM and/or Recharge)?' If it was simply a matter of selling the SIM cards, it would not be a problem, but the difficulty lies in activating the SIM cards so that they can be used. This process requires an Internet connection or a long wait on the phone. It's a Catch-22 situation for them - without an activated SIM, seafarers can't ring to get their SIM activated; and very few vessels have free Internet Access for their seafarers. Add to this the problems of language and cash conversions - seafarers are paid in \$US but the cards are priced in \$AUS! - and SIM Card Activation

The same problem applies to SIM Cards bought elsewhere that are unusable because they've not been activated. Post-9/11 Government regulations concerning the activation of SIM cards require the purchaser to prove their identity so that the SIM card may be linked to an identifiable person. It is not an ideal situation but, in these days of heightened security, these are measures to which we are obliged to conform.

If seafarers come into our Centre with the appropriate identification, it is now a relatively 'painless' process to activate their SIM cards for them. Their reactions when they realise that they can now contact home 'makes their day' – and we're very happy about that!

Chaplain Un Tay

Recently, 'Captain Carlos' visited our Mission. As we chatted, I discovered he came from the same home state as me. He shared that he is a Christian and had actively attended church and youth fellowship in his High School days. Since he joined the work force and married, however, he had drifted from the Gospel. That was almost 30 years ago.



Where was he, spiritually? He still professed to be Christian but, at best, his foundation wasn't very firm. I met up with him again on his next voyage, and gave him a CD and booklet about authentic Christianity. Last week, his vessel berthed at Port Botany. He invited me to lunch and said that he had finished reading the booklet I gave him. We had a very good discussion in which he asked many questions. I am very impressed by his commitment.

This time, I gave him two DVDs and a book. He assured me that he will read through the book and we will meet again for discussion and fellowship when his vessel berths at Port Botany in mid-October.

The other highlight of that visit was when 'Captain Carlos' introduced me to his Chief Cook, who is also from my home state. He too is a Christian and shared his testimony of how, in Perth, his life was transformed after becoming a Christian there.



He joined in our conversation and fellowship and is looking forward to our next meeting. I am very encouraged

by their enthusiasm to learn and urge you to pray with me as I follow-up to strengthen their faith and hasten their spiritual growth.

A New Website is Here!

In today's day and age, an organisation's public profile is (for better or for worse) largely determined by its website and Facebook page (our Facebook page is 'The Mission to Seafarers, Sydney NSW').

It's taken a while, but now we have our very own, dedicated website. When you look up www.missiontoseafarers.org.au you will find a website that is very attractive, informative, and helpful. The website contains:

- prayer and praise points;
- regular contributions by our Chaplains;
- recognition of our donors;
- opportunities to donate;
- opportunities to enquire about volunteering;
- past and present issues of The Master's Mariner;
- links to supportive Shipping Companies;
- upcoming events;
- and lots more!

Bravo or 'Cyco'?

In our last edition of TMM, I told you about my proposed bike ride from Hobart to Sydney. A number of people were relieved to learn that, due to logistics problems, we decided to shorten the ride so that it is now from Melbourne to Sydney – a mere 1025 kms!

All is ready to go. On Monday & Tuesday 21st & 22nd September, Janette & I will drive to Melbourne. On Thursday 24th September, I will begin the journey back to Sydney. The route and schedule may be found in the enclosed flyer so that, all being well, I hope to arrive at the Mission sometime during the afternoon of Monday 5th October.

The purpose of the ride is to raise funds to support our transport ministry for seafarers, which costs us a tremendous amount of money each year. Janette & I are funding the ride ourselves, to ensure that 100% of monies donated goes to seafarer welfare. If you are able to help us, your support will be greatly appreciated.