



The Master's Mariner - April 2019

A Wonderful Challenging Year!

Greetings to all supporters, volunteers, prayer partners, church pastors and leaders!

2018 was a great year! We introduced a few new initiatives and have seen great results!



Breakthrough - visiting crew on board!

For the first time in many years, and out of Operation Cruise Terminal initiative, the Lord gave us a breakthrough to go on board to visit the crew on Majestic Princess. The Captain, HR manager and senior officers visited our Portable Mission Station at the Overseas Passenger Terminal and invited us to go on board. Since then, we have been visiting the crew on board Majestic Princess, bringing magazines, flyers, internet SIM cards etc., interacting and answering any questions they have. The crew expressed their appreciation for visiting them because they were busy working and did not have time to come and visit the Mission.

Successful Operation Cruise Terminal 2018/2019

The year 2019 started on a high note. It is exciting to see a record number of seafarers from the cruise vessels visiting our Mission! Since our Mission moved to Hickson Road in the year 2013, I was quite puzzled as to why so few seafarers from the cruise vessels were visiting our Centre. I had been visiting the crew on board the various cruise vessels each year but only 10 seafarers had visited our Mission each season.

Since our launching, we have had more than 250 seafarers visit our Mission to date! 90% of seafarers on board the cruise vessels had not heard of the Mission to Seafarers, the other 10% who had heard of our Mission did not know where we were located. We can thankfully say, that we have increased the awareness of our Mission among the seafarers with our presence at the Overseas Passenger Terminal, visiting them on board the vessels and distributing 3000 copies of our flyers! Our Operation Cruise Terminal has been a great success! Thanks to your prayers and encouragement and our great team of players - both staff and volunteers! Bravo!

Parcel Collecting Centre at MTS

Another successful initiative is that we have informed seafarers from the cruise vessels that they can send their parcels/orders to our address. When their vessels call at OPT, they come in personally to collect their parcels. We have seen more than 150 parcels delivered to us. They are very grateful to the mission for rendering this important and practical service to them.

DRINKS AND INFORMATION NIGHT

You are invited to come and see what we do, meet a seafarer and enjoy a drink with us, at the Mission to Seafarers, Sydney NSW

When: 23rd July, 2019, 5.30pm for 6.00pm

Where: Ground Floor, 24 Hickson Rd Millers Point

RSVP: 16th July

Email: enquiries@missiontoseafarers.org.au

Ph No: 9241 3009

Volunteers

We are currently looking for volunteers to partner with us. We are looking for drivers who have a Light Rigid vehicle license, to drive our small buses. To get involved please [contact us](#).

Australian Council of MTS and Stella Maris joined Chaplaincy Training on 11-14 February 2019

The above training was organised and held at the Mary Mackillop Centre, North Sydney. More than 30 chaplains and staff from Australia and a few from New Zealand attended this training. Troy attended this training. We had 6 visitors and the keynote speaker, Jason Zuidema from the States visited our Mission on Monday, 11th February.

Chief Cook visiting our Mission and Sydney, 1-3 March 2019

Steven, a chief cook with OOCL and his wife visited our Mission upon arrival on the 1st of March. He expressed his appreciation to our Mission for caring and supporting seafarers like him and many others. They stayed with the Rev Un Tay for two nights.

Death on a Ship

Report by Chaplain Jim Watt

When a man dies today on a merchant ship in international waters, he is no longer sent overboard to Davy Jones locker to rest with those that have gone before him, as in years gone by.

Shipping companies now take responsibility for the family of the deceased and organise the repatriation of the body to his or her homeland. Such was the case recently when a seafarer suddenly took ill and died in the arms of two of his crewmates. He appeared to have no current health issues but did complain about some pain in his body after visiting an Asian port only to think it would pass quickly. He seemed to recover ok and performed his duties, but it wasn't long before he collapsed and despite receiving immediate medical assistance, passed away. The ship docked at an Australian port on a Saturday morning and was met by an entourage of police officers, port authorities, a representative of the ship's owners who had flown in, the deceased's central Asian embassy diplomats, an insurance man, a counsellor and a chaplain from the Mission to Seafarers. Before the body could be removed the entire crew needed to be interviewed and this would take some time. The police did their work with humanity and efficiency, the counsellor met with the two men who were with the deceased at the end and arrangements were made for the chaplain to meet with the assembled crew.

The crew were definitely an international crew. Indians, Romanians, Filipinos, Sri Lankans, Chinese and others from Peru, Indonesia and Montenegro, all meant that this was a cross cultural event over which the chaplain would preside.

With so many nationalities on board it was important that more than one person speak at such a critical time. The chaplain read some relevant bible verses and encouraged someone to pray in the language of the deceased. The captain prayed for the family of the seafarer and the owner's representative spoke eloquently and warmly of how the crew is itself a family too. The seafarer had died with a bible in his hand and there is hope that his family and friends will see him again. The crew were given a time to say goodbye to their friend whether in the quiet of their own hearts or out loud to the meeting. They were given the opportunity to speak privately to the chaplain after the service if they so wished. Their grieving will go on for some time yet and hopefully they will reach out to one another.

The seafarer closest to him was repatriated to his hometown as he had been profoundly affected by this tragic event.

Logistic difficulties meant that the ship was not able to unload all its cargo, so it had to leave the dock and sail outside the port for some days. The chaplain had brought phone cards on board for their time outside the port however, when they were finally able to dock for more than a day the Mission to Seafarers provided specifically arranged bus transport for two days, from a wharf quite some way from the city into our centre. Now the crew could enjoy seeing the sights and the shops that they had been previously prevented from getting near to. After this traumatic time, they were in need of rest, relaxation and time away from their vessel, which is provided at the Mission to Seafarers



Sydney centre on Hickson Road.

What happened to the YM Efficiency?

Report by Rev Un Tay

When the vessel came into the DP World terminal, it had been days since it lost the containers in rough weather. It arrived on 6 June, a Wednesday. My staff went to the port, but they weren't allowed access to the crew, because the captain said they were too busy. Okay, it's the first day after they arrived, we understand. But we tried again and again, but they wouldn't let us on board.

After a week, I went up again, I thought I'd give them time and space to sort things out, but they gave me the same story: too busy, investigations are ongoing. I know that when these things happen, some of the crew can be traumatised. They might be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, so they need someone to be up there to talk to them, to provide counselling to them, to provide pastoral care. So, I was about to go down the gangway, and suddenly the AMSA officer appeared, like an angel in front of me. I said, "Hey, can you ask the captain to allow me to visit the crew?" He looked at me, I was in my gear, my hard hat with the Mission to Seafarers logo. He turned to the second mate, and said, "Mission to Seafarers are our good friends, they do a fabulous job! Let him in!"

The second mate was stunned, and he didn't know what to do or how to respond. He had no choice but to bring me in.



He brought me to the ship's office, they were all having a meeting. The captain told me to sit, but I asked him if I could go up to the mess room. There's no point in me sitting there in the meeting, for what? So, I went up to the crew mess, I went up there and I talked to the crew and discovered that some of them didn't have sim cards for their phones. Just put yourself in their position. There was an incident like that, which is international news, and if your parents back home watch that news, and say "Oh my son is on that vessel and they've had this incident at sea and look at the damage and I have no news from them are they okay or anything?"

Just imagine the kind of trauma that they went through, not just them as seafarers on the ship, but their families back home, they would be terrified, waiting for them to call, and complete silence, they are back home worrying, having sleepless nights, that is tormenting if you're the parents of the crew. Fortunately, I had pre-activated sim cards, and they were able to contact their families. I also discovered that the crew weren't being allowed to leave the vessel. They can't do anything – removing damaged containers was not their expertise, and for weeks the captain wasn't allowing them to leave.

I sent an email to the AMSA officer I met on board, saying the crew were not allowed to get off, asking if he was able to tell the captain to release the crew. That evening, the captain released the crew. Eight of them came down after my conversation with AMSA. The next day, another eight of the crew came out. I was really happy for the crew. What a great outcome. The Mission to Seafarers are apolitical, as such we are able to play an advocacy role.



The 55th Merchant Navy Annual Commemoration Service at Rookwood, Necropolis

Rev Un Tay along with two of our directors, attended the above Commemoration Service on Sunday, 14th April, 2019 at 11:00am. Speaker: Mr Peter Dexter AM, is the Chairman of the Australian National Maritime Museum (ANMM) and a Director of the Australian National Maritime Museum Foundation.



Paddle for the Mission to Seafarers



- Great Team Building Event
- Support by sponsoring those paddling
- Starting November 18th, 2019

The Mission Statement of The Mission to Seafarers, Sydney NSW, is:

“To fulfil the spiritual, moral and physical well-being of seafarers and all persons whose callings and occupations are in any way associated with the sea.”

The staff, board, volunteers and supporters of the Mission to Seafarers, are acutely aware, that whilst we are providing many essential services to the crews of the vessels providing more than 98% of goods used on a daily basis by each one of us, there is more work to be done. This includes:

1. Providing services for seafarers whose vessels berth at **White Bay** during the cruise ship season. These services would include a return bus trip to our city centre, where crew can enjoy all the facilities that our city centre offers, as well as having a chaplain on board vessels to provide assistance to crew unable to enjoy shore leave. Due to the large numbers of crew on passenger vessels, this service would provide assistance to approx. 20,000 – 30,000 seafarers/per annum
2. Providing services to seafarers arriving at **Kurnell**. Currently, crew arriving at Kurnell are very isolated and have no way of accessing sim cards and mobile phone top ups so that they can be in touch with loved ones at home. Our aim is to have a chaplain visit the crew on board and provide them with sim cards and other essential supplies. This service would provide assistance to approx. 4,000 seafarers/per annum
3. To add a morning return bus run to **Port Botany**. This service would provide return transport and welfare services to approx. an extra 3,000 seafarers (on top of the 8,000 – 9,000 already receiving transport & welfare services) from Port Botany, and in turn provide many benefits to their families.

Of course, to achieve these additional objectives, extra funding is needed. We hope to raise funds by applying for grants, voluntary donations and our own fund-raising events. To kick start this, in November this year we will see our **Accountant Gary, Chaplain Troy and Supporter James** taking on the Massive Murray Paddle. This involves kayaking 404km down the Murray River from Yarrowonga to Swan Hill over 5 days raising money for the Mission.

As the Mission relies on the support of generous benefactors to serve the Seafarers 363 days per year, we hope that all individuals and companies will get behind this endeavour and sponsor Gary, Troy and James or paddle with them.

Some examples of what your sponsorship will provide:

- ❖ 10 cents per kilometre will provide: Return transport for 4 seafarers from Port Botany to our Mission
- ❖ 25 cents per kilometre will provide: Ship visiting for a day, a chaplain may visit up to 6 vessels, assisting approx. 50 – 60 crew
- ❖ 1 dollar per kilometre will provide: 1 month of free wi-fi for all seafarers coming into our centre enabling them to communicate with their loved ones

For more information, to start a team or to support our paddlers go to our website:

www.missiontoseafarers.org.au or contact Gary King **9241 3009 / 0402 100 348**



Contact Details

We are also currently updating our contact list. Please fill in the form that is included and send it back to us or email us with your details.

Mission to Seafarers, Sydney NSW

GF 24 Hickson Rd, Millers Point, NSW 2000

Ph: (02) 9241 3009

enquiries@missiontoseafarers.org.au

<http://www.missiontoseafarers.org.au/>

[https://www.facebook.com/Mission-to-Seafarers-Sydney-](https://www.facebook.com/Mission-to-Seafarers-Sydney-571344713325415/)

[571344713325415/](https://www.facebook.com/Mission-to-Seafarers-Sydney-571344713325415/)

Direct Debits:

Tax Deductible Welfare A/C:

BSB **062 074** Account **1000 8062**



Please donate to our cause