

31/03/2020

The Master's Mariner



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March Report

By Wendy King

We are now well into 2020 and whilst we were in the midst of planning exciting new ventures for the year, the outbreak of Covid-19 has created many challenges, but firstly we want to draw your attention to the final figure raised for our 'Massive Murray' paddle fundraising event. Thank you to all our generous supporters who enabled us to raise this impressive amount. These funds allowed us to begin our first objective, of providing services for seafarers arriving at White Bay. From the middle of November we provided a return shuttle bus on the weekend, dependent on cruise ship timetables, from the White Bay cruise terminal to our city centre, as well as having chaplains on board vessels to provide assistance to crew unable to enjoy shore leave. This new initiative has provided transport for approximately 670 seafarers (to the end of February), as well as thousands on board the vessels. Our chaplains and volunteers have had very long days on board, selling Sim cards, top up cards, providing free Wi-Fi and holding services. These transport and welfare services have been greatly appreciated by all seafarers, and we will certainly attempt to continue with this initiative when we can once again resume our normal operations.

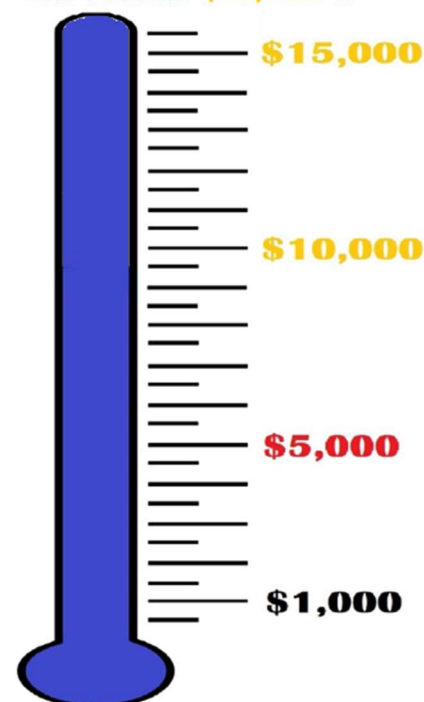
Together we have made a difference to many thousands of seafarer's lives and also, to their families, so on behalf of the mission staff, volunteers, seafarers and their families, a very big Thank You!

Please see page 3 for info on upcoming events.

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Massive Murray Paddle Fundraiser

- we raised \$17,788 !!



Easter Season

BY ANDREW WRIGHT

As we approach Easter and meditate on the importance of John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” We would like to share with you the Lent contemplations of The Mission to Seafarers Secretary General, Andrew Wright

“I sometimes compare the season of Lent to the annual dry docking of ships. These are times when crew and shore-based workers look at every aspect of the vessel, including below the waterline. If they find issues, they set about repairs.

These very important times are about a great deal more than a bit of painting. The ship must be fully prepared to operate safely and efficiently in a hostile and dangerous environment. During Lent, Christians similarly look at the fundamentals of their lives, asking questions about the faithfulness of their walk in the way of Jesus. If we are honest, most of us find that more than just a bit of surface paint is necessary! I would suggest that asking some of those big questions is good practice for all, regardless of where we stand on matters of faith. Certainly, it is important for us as The Mission to Seafarers. As an organisation, we try to keep asking hard questions – and have been doing just that as we prepare to launch a new strategy. We must make sure that we are ship-shape.

As the Mission to Seafarers family, observing this season together, it is surely right that all of us include some thinking about how our lives impact on those of others, especially the neediest. No doubt that reflection will include some thinking about seafarers and their families, in whom you have a special and proven interest. We are so grateful to all of you for your support and generosity over so many years. That support has been crucial in helping us to sustain effective and caring maritime ministry.

You share our recognition of the daily personal sacrifices made by seafarers. On average, they are at sea and away from their families for nine months at a time. During that time, they will encounter a variety of challenges, including such basic things as staying in touch with home. Then there is the limited shore leave, very long working hours, loneliness, isolation and sometimes really acute issues like serious injury or finding yourself on an abandoned ship.

We are so grateful for the constant acts of kindness that allow us in turn to serve the 1.5 million men and women who work at sea. Your friendship, your financial generosity, your words of encouragement through letters and postcards, perhaps your practical volunteering, are all so greatly appreciated. They go a long way to making seafarers and their families feel valued.”

May you have a blessed Lent and Easter – and thanks for keeping seafarers in mind through this important season.”

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Caring for crew on cruise ships



The festive season proved a great opportunity for the Sydney Missions to Seafarers to show its worth.

Christmas Rush, in early December, on one of our regular visits on board *Majestic Princess*, the HR manager came to me with an urgent request. She looked distressed saying, “I need to buy five big Christmas trees, decorations and some presents for the vessel and crew. I have only three hours to do my shopping. I don’t know where to shop” I said we could help. With the aid of our volunteer driver, we drove her to North Sydney. The first shop we tried was sold out so we went to another mall and found what she wanted and purchased the trees, decorations and presents. We arrived back at the vessel one hour before her shore leave ended. She greatly appreciated our efforts to help.

The White Island Incident, on 9 December 2019, a group of tourists, mainly from *Ovation of the Seas* visited the White Island volcano in New Zealand. There was a terrible tragedy with 19 people killed and 2 missing. A week later the vessel returned to Sydney with 6 bodies being repatriated. I received a call requesting our chaplains to go onboard and provide pastoral care and support to the crew for trauma. Our team of chaplains including 1 psychologist, went onboard. The crew shared how difficult it was during this tragedy, especially for those who were asked to collect and pack the victims’ belongings. Due to the frustration of some of the passengers, some crewmembers were verbally abused. We ministered to many crewmembers and provided comfort through prayers and counselling; they were also given free pocket New Testaments’. We were glad to be there for the crew.



A NOTE FOR YOUR DIARIES

**COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION 30TH APRIL
2020**

**Unfortunately, now postponed until
further notice**

SEA SUNDAY – 12TH JULY 2020

A morning service will be held at St Andrews
Cathedral, George St Sydney

Unfortunately, now postponed until further notice

By MTS STAFF

Covid – 19 Update

2020 is already presenting us with many challenges, some quite unexpected, such as Covid-19. With this pandemic now upon us, we have put protocols in place, which need to be fluid, changing as needed along with the Government regulations.

There was a Board Meeting and staff meeting held in March where this situation was discussed, after consultation with AMSA and the Port Authority of NSW, with the best procedures being decided on and put in to place. These measures have been important to enable us to continue to provide services to seafarers where possible, as well as keeping our staff protected. At this time our bus services have been suspended, but the mission centre remains open although with reduced hours & staffing arrangements. We will be delivering Sim cards, and supplies as requested, to the vessels directly, as well as assisting seafarers to collect the parcels that they have had delivered to our centre, for as long as possible. As this terrible situation develops, we will attempt to keep you informed as changes take place.

Thank you for taking the time to read our latest newsletter. Our thoughts & prayers are with you all. Please remember we need your support even more now and consider making a donation through our [website](#) or making a direct deposit using the information on the right, also see below for how you could volunteer in the future.

Volunteers – When once again possible

We are will be looking for volunteers to partner with us.

Drivers who have a Light Rigid vehicle license, to drive our small buses.

We are also looking for people to help with researching potential companies to partner with us financially.

To get involved please [contact us](#).

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Tax deductible donations can also be made directly into our Bank Account:

BSB 062 074

Account 1000 8062

Cheques can be sent, however there may be a delay in processing as banking will only be done fortnightly.

As together we go through these troubling times, please continue to remember us and all seafarers in your prayers and financially through your donations, both regular and by creating a bequest through your will which is a special way you can continue to care for seafarers.

**Thank you, stay well and
God bless you all.**