

The Master's Mariner



Autumn 2023

News from *Mission to Seafarers Sydney*

24 Hickson Rd Sydney 2000

+61 2 9241 3009

www.missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au

enquiries@missiontoseafarers.org.au



Our EOFY Appeal – Please contribute to our Winter Gift Bags and Ship Visits!

Our gift bags help to break the ice when our Chaplains visit seafarers who cannot leave their ships. Our Chaplains are often the first person the seafarers have seen other than the people they work with, for many months. Far from family and home, our Chaplain's friendly smile and listening ear help to renew seafarers' strength for the next part of their voyage.



Bring a smile to the face of seafarer when you consider your end of financial year giving.

Your **tax deductible donation** will enable us to supplementing our **Winter Gift Bags** with extra warm socks, lip balm and hot chocolate sachets as well as supporting our welfare work.

Any more knitters out there? We urgently need more beanies – seafarers love them! *See pg 4*

Invitation: Join us for our Annual 2023 Luncheon – Early Bird price ends May 26



Almost 150 port community leaders, members and people who care about seafarers have already committed to attending our Annual Luncheon on June 16. Our guest speaker is Paddy Crumlin who has extensive insights into the tough lives of seafarers and was recently appointed to the Albanese Government's Strategic Fleet Taskforce. He initially went to sea in 1978 in the Australian Merchant Navy, has served in the leadership of the Maritime Union of Australia since 1993 and as President of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) since 2010.

Join us at NSW Parliament House - all proceeds will be used to expand our welfare work supporting seafarers. More information at: <https://tinyurl.com/MtSLunch23> or phone us on 02 9241 3009.

Thank you to our Luncheon Sponsors: Silver - Gulf Agency Company. Bronze - Australian Maritime Safety Authority, NSW Ports, Daily Cargo News and The Being Group.

Invitation: Sea Sunday is back – please join us at St Andrews Cathedral on July 9 at 10.30am. Message by Anglican Archbishop Kanishka de Silva Raffel and prayers for seafarers. Guests include quartet from the Royal Australian Navy Band. Everyone welcome. Contact us for more information.

THANK YOU, FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES AT OUR 2023 AGM

Thank you to our members and supporters who joined us for our Annual General Meeting. Impact data was highlighted and the heartfelt stories behind it. As we enjoy royal patronage, King Charles III's coronation was recognised with a morning tea and toast. Board members, volunteers and staff were thanked for their passion and commitment.

Tributes were given as we formally farewelled our Chair **Peter Janssen** OAM, financial manager **Gary King**, who had been integral to our team since 2008, and Board member **Brett Douglas** who had served for over 10 years. All have helped find new ways for the Mission to help seafarers including during covid and to improve structures and services.

We welcomed our new Chair Robert Dunn, the former Chair of the Port Authority of New South Wales, who has also worked as a director and CEO of charity Opportunity International Australia (OIA) and continues as the Chair of BaptistCare NSW & ACT. He has also held directorships at Pacific National (freight rail), Virgin Blue Holdings (airline) and Jet Turbine Services (aircraft maintenance).

Mr Dunn said he was inspired to take the role by the strength of the existing Board, the impressive work of the Mission and covid lockdown experiences. He said his own brief taste of lockdown in Sydney reminded him of how much seafarers sacrificed every day. This role was a good opportunity to give something back especially through this organisation which had showed its vital skills and compassion during that difficult time.

We were also delighted to welcome **Daniel Belzer** to our Board, a highly experienced charity business development manager and a colleague of Rob's from OIA days. Daniel is now head of Business Development at charity Library for All.

An integral member of our office team also started that day: **Sarah Mercer** (part-time) who is looking forward to using her administration and medical reception experience to support our team and welcome seafarers.



Farewell Message from Chair Peter Janssen (right)

With my term as Chair now having come to an end, I am delighted to announce that Rob Dunn has succeeded me. I cannot think of a person in the whole country who is better placed to lead this fine organisation.

Rob is both an experienced Chair and CEO, is active in his local church and comes to us with a maritime industry background. I have no doubt that he will make an outstanding Chair of the Mission as it continues to serve vulnerable seafarers. Please join me in welcoming Rob as he has kindly agreed to serve in this way.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your wonderful support. It has very much been much appreciated. May God continue to richly bless the Mission and each of you. Best wishes, Peter

Find out what inspired Rob to say yes:
<https://tinyurl.com/MeetMtSChair>

Message from Rob Dunn (left in pic):

"Thank you to everyone who attended the AGM and for my warm welcome. Thanks to retiring Chair Peter Janssen for your great leadership.

What I love about the Mission to Seafarers Sydney is that it is totally people focused. It is special volunteering for a charity where you can interact with those you are helping. And we are ready to do so much more if we have additional resources."



Chaplain Jim Reflects on Helping in Dark Times

We recently welcomed a distressed seafarer who couldn't bear to go back on board his vessel. He was feeling frustrated and helpless. His wife had suffered a miscarriage and then their pet dog died and he couldn't be there for them. He sought our help. We explained the situation to Boarder Force and contacted the ship agent who was able to arrange a flight back to India so that he could be safely reunited with his wife and family.

Sometimes fatalities occur on ships and everyone needs to find a way to cope. I spent four days on one vessel reassuring various crew members that the suicide of their officer was not their fault. He hadn't told anyone of his intention so they couldn't have done anything more than what they had already done. Sessions with the officer's regular team, the security guards who discovered the body and the medical team, enabled people to say what they needed to say as well as encourage one another. People were able to move on from shock and begin the grieving process. Sadly seafarer suicides are over 10 times more likely to occur than the Australian average.

Another time an electrician had been caught in the elevator shaft when a big swell hit. He was fatally injured despite the best efforts of his crewmates to rescue him. His best friend only made it to his side as he breathed his last. We held a service for the crew who were still in shock and much reserved. Thankfully the friend did take up our offer to talk about it one on one afterwards. I was able to assure him that the situation was out of his control and he was in no way to blame for his friend's death.

The majority of conversations on board vessels are much lighter than the above examples. We visit crews at berth, informing them of our bus service and our Centre, provide sim cards, gifts and listening to their needs. Life at sea is tough and we provide a warm welcome and key services for all our visitors. I am available if anyone wants to call on my counselling skills.

Chaplain Jim has a BTh from Moore College, experience in pastoring two churches and in prison fellowship, and a Diploma in Counselling.

Hear Chaplain Jim's recent interview on Hope 103.2 FM here:

<https://omny.fm/shows/hope-1032-interviews/mission-to-seafarers-jim-watt-chaplain>

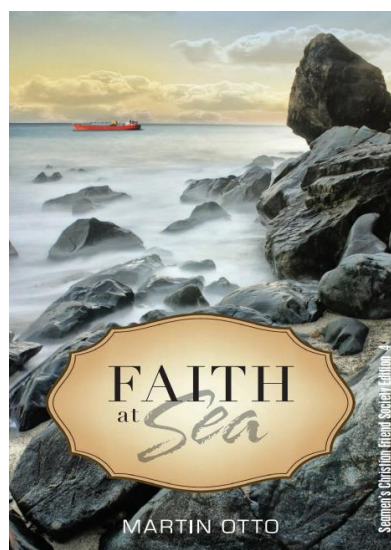
Learn more about how we help seafarers to stay safe and happy –

See our new video – The Mission Centre in Action

Thank you to seafarer visitor Nataly for making this video during her visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/OurCentreinAction>

This video will also feature on our new website – COMING SOON!



***Would you like the latest free e-book from author
Rev Martin Otto for seafarers and supporters?***

Just email us if you would. Thank you Rev Martin!

**It includes the testimonies of a captain whose ship was pirated at open sea,
and another whose ship was caught at sea between two typhoons.**



Rev MARTIN OTTO and his wife Monika have been serving seafarers in the port of Hamburg for the last 30 years. They work with the international seamen's mission, Seamen's Christian Friend Society based in the UK. Martin has visited more than 20,000 ships (cargo ships, cruise ships, navy ships and yachts) and shares in this book, out of his wealth of experience, how seafarers can confront temptation.

BEANIE BLESSINGS! Thank you to all the volunteers involved!



The Winter Chill means every seafarer who visits heads straight for our 'Free Beanies' basket! Handmade beanies are also the first things that brings a smile of delight during ship visits when our Chaplains hand out gift bags.

Thank you so much to the volunteers who make this possible! Recently we received a bulging bag from Henty, a town of only 863 people near Wagga Wagga. Even with these plus another bag from Queensland last week, the beanies were all gone by last Wednesday. Later that day, an 'angel' from Dee Why arrived with about 8 shipping bags brimming with more Beanies!

They will be gone in about two weeks so if you've been knitting or crocheting - please send them in!

Seafarers can lose up to 60% of their body heat through their head on an icy cold night at sea, so your knitted items can make a real difference to their comfort and health. The warmth and the love involved are greatly appreciated – scarves are very welcome too.

For beanie pattern ideas see: <https://mtsnewcastle.org.au/donate/knitting-beanies/>

LOVING OUR NEIGHBOURS! Thank you to The Being Group

A chance meeting between Rev Tay and a staffer from an office upstairs has led to a great blessing for us here on the admin team.

Phil B from The Being Group: "When we found out the real need of seafarers around the world, and learned how Mission to Seafarers helps them meet the challenges of a difficult, dangerous and lonely life on the sea, we were both moved and awed. We were stunned at the numbers – that 1.6 million seafarers are on the sea around the world at any given time, some for years, in harsh, isolated conditions.



Siebert (CEO) and Kerry (Principal) The Being Group – now how to explain what the Mission does in one sentence?

As we became friends with our downstairs neighbours, we couldn't help but ask what we could do to help. (We also love the snacks from around the world in the Mission to Seafarers' shop!) As a pro bono project, we held a strategic workshop, helped with messages for the new website and identifying opportunities for the Mission to tell its extraordinary story into the future.

The Being Group is a full-service strategic consultancy and creative agency. We are "Enabling Human Endeavour" so only do meaningful work with clients making the world a better place. We were privileged and delighted at the opportunity to help Mission to Seafarers make life better for the more than 400,000 seafarers who visit Sydney, in need of care, every year."

Help Us Save On Postage – if you received this newsletter in the mail, please consider giving us your email address so we can send you future editions via email. Send a message to us at support@missiontoseafarers.org.au if you agree. If not, we are happy to keep mailing it to you.

Please donate to our EOFY Winter Gift Bag Appeal:

- i) select 'donations' on our website – this generates an instant tax-deductible receipt OR
- ii) complete the enclosed giving card. If you prefer, you may telephone us.

Thank you for whatever you are able to do