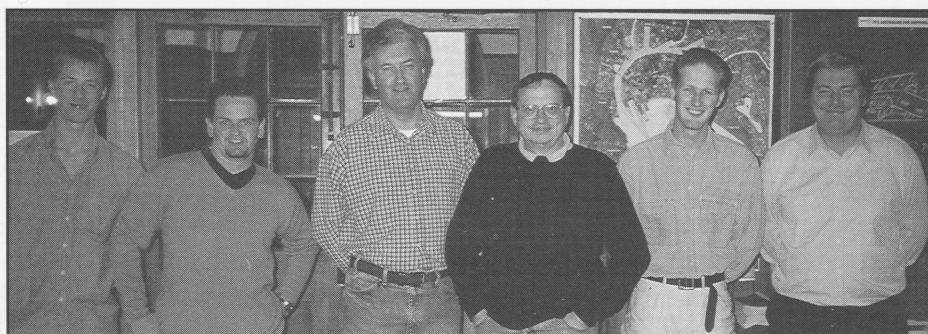


Ship to Shore

The Newsletter of the Mission to Seafarers Victoria. Autumn 2002

AT WORK WITH A MISSION VOLUNTEER

You can't put a price on these rewards



Volunteer Tony Williams (third from right) and seafarers at the Melbourne Mission.

The young Chinese seaman could not speak English. He was bewildered and lonely, as volunteer Tony Williams brought him to the Melbourne Mission. Then Tony discovered he was familiar with the internet, so sat him down at one of the computers. Within minutes, the image of a very young baby appeared on the screen, and the man burst into tears. It was his first sight of his newly-born son.

Experiences of this sort are the rewards that come to Mission volunteers, and Tony Williams has had many of them during his time with the Mission, offering both practical and spiritual help.

"We have to remember that these days, seafarers are very isolated from the rest of the community," Tony said. "They have very little time in port and some crew members might be nine months on the ship without a break."

On a typical day Tony will read the information on shipping movements provided by the Victorian Channels Authority, then plan what vessels and in what order, he will visit. Then he loads up his briefcase with

leaflets about the Mission, written in English, Russian, Chinese and Korean, and sets off in the Mission bus for the docks.

As soon as he boards a ship he asks to see the Master or a senior officer, as a matter of courtesy. Often, he will find the Master especially eager for conversation, because his position on board can limit social interaction with his fellow-seafarers. Then Tony introduces himself to the other officers and calls on the crew, most often first in the messroom. He tells them his name, and always says he is from "The Flying Angel" because that's how seafarers throughout the world refer to the Mission.

Sometimes he will talk to crew members in a group, but occasionally someone will ask to speak to him alone. That generally happens when they are back at the Mission.

The next move is to find out when those who are going ashore need to be picked up by the bus, a fairly complicated matter because ships are berthed all around the port, from Gellibrand to Webb Dock. The Mission's bus is barely adequate to cope with the service, so Tony is now going for his licence to drive a 36-seater, if it becomes necessary to hire one, or the Mission acquires one.

Driving the bus is not always a matter of tripping from one Melbourne berth to another. Recently, Tony had to pick up nine crew members from Melbourne airport to join their ship at Portland, stayed overnight,

then brought the returning crew back to Tullamarine to fly home – a round trip of 712 kilometres. The ship's agents paid the Mission for the service, promising to use it for future trips of this kind.

The seafarers are always

taken first to the Mission to allow crew members to change their money at the Mission's foreign currency exchange. Afterwards, they are taken to whatever destinations they have for the day and arrangements made to get them back to their ships.

Tony's passion for the sea was generated at the age of 10 by the sea voyage with his parents when they emigrated from England in 1961. "I found it a magical experience, and I fell in love with the sea," he says. Later, he joined the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve, serving for six years, while working for Telecom as an installations manager in the early days of mobile phones. He then went overseas for 10 years, working in Britain and Europe, and returned to work on a 20,000ha farm on the Western Plains of NSW.

Back in Melbourne, he recognised his true vocation, and enrolled at Ridley College as a theology student. There, he heard a lecture by Mission workers Bryce Amner and Sally Cloke and was inspired to join. Now ordained, he is at present a pastoral and community worker at St Luke's Church in South Melbourne, devoting each Monday to his work for the Mission to Seafarers.

You, too, can become a Mission volunteer
The Mission to Seafarers urgently needs volunteers for ship visiting in all Victorian ports. For more information call either Padre Ted Cosens or Judy Douglas on (03) 9629 7083.

MISSION TO SEAFARERS

717 Flinders Street Extension, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005. Phone 03 9629 7083 Facsimile 03 0629 8450

Volunteers past and present recognised at reunion

Past members of the Harbour Lights Guild and volunteers with service going back as far as the 1930s joined current volunteers from Geelong and Melbourne at a "thank you" get-together at the Mission to Seafarers in Melbourne on Saturday, February 23.

A total of 29 volunteers attended the event, the first on the Mission social calendar for 2002.

Maria Culka organised afternoon tea with her usual style and flair, feature being a blackberry slice (berries handpicked by Bishop Jeremy).

Among the longest-serving of the volunteers, Lal Simpson and Gwynne Scott were 19 year-olds when they came to the Mission twice on weekdays and once on Sundays. Lal, who met her husband at one of the evening dances, remembers that her husband first danced with Gwynne. Fortunately for Lal, Gwynne was already engaged to a war-time journalist.

The celebrated Padre Oliver called Gwynne, Lal and Mavis the "three faithfuls". They were always around to help with the flowers, serve dinners or become "the dancing girls".

The Harbour Lights volunteers, the backbone of the Mission for decades, made thousands of seamen welcome. Each evening after work, as there were no trams from Flinders Street Station, the girls would walk to and from the Mission and, however late it was, they always felt safe.

Audrey Adderson was associated with the Mission from 1941 to 1964. She worked at the Kayser factory and came in regularly to do the flowers, serve Sunday lunch and dance with the boys. She met hundreds of merchant seamen and thought them very brave young men. The vessels they worked on bringing cargo to Australian ports during the war had no guns or armaments to protect the crews.

Audrey sent food parcels for about six years after the war to families in England. One woman who received parcels had a neighbour who was a



From left: Gwynne Scott, Iris Purnell, Pauline Moye, (standing) and Lal Simpson.

butcher. The young man left to find work and adventure in Australia. He brought with him a parcel from England to Audrey. And not much later, he and Audrey married.

Marge Duckett, a fit, line-dancing 74-year-old original Williamstown resident, served at the Williamstown Mission Op Shop in the 1940s. She remembers how difficult it was to become a volunteer. There were 30/40 single girls who were volunteers at the Op Shop. Mothers with young children joined the Lighthouse Keepers auxiliary.

The girls had to have three references from their minister, their employer and another professional person in order to join. In addition, they had to serve a three-month probationary period, were given a book of rules and were not allowed to address anyone by their Christian name. Most of the ladies who came to the function had not visited the Mission since the 1950s when the Guild's fund-raising fetes stopped, but they still meet at each other's homes to celebrate twice a year. They are delighted to know that their work and the dedication of all volunteers is being acknowledged and recognised.

Joy Stansfeld, a valued donor to the Mission, celebrated her 94th birthday with Lal Simpson, a mere 87-year-old.



Ready for the cutting of the birthday cake ... Joy Stansfeld (seated) and Lal Simpson.

Guild ladies get a running report on emergency

While the Harbour Lights Guild ladies and volunteers were at their reunion in February, State Chaplain Padre Ted was dealing with an emergency on which he was able to report to the gathering as events unfolded.

A seaman from Myanmar (Burma) had become seriously ill on board his ship in Melbourne and had to be taken to a Melbourne hospital for treatment. During the Guild reunion, Ted was organising a translator for the seafarer and also making contact with the Mission to Seafarers chaplain in Bangkok, Padre John Bell, to ensure the man was met at the airport and that his case was properly followed up. Next morning, Ted took the man to Melbourne airport for the flight to Bangkok.

A splendid cake, baked by Maria, candles and a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday" rounded off another special occasion.

Joy remembered celebrating her 5th birthday on Lord Nelson's ship *Victory*, which was still afloat in Portsmouth harbour. Her father was a ship's captain and was able to get her a ticket to go aboard the *Victory*.

Bishop Jeremy Ashton welcomed all volunteers and the committee and thanked them for the time and effort put into the work of the Mission over the years. Nigel Porteus, Chairman of the Committee, and Rev Ted Cosens thanked all volunteers and emphasised the importance of the work of the mission.

An Easter Message

In the second Eucharistic Thanksgiving in *A Prayer Book for Australia*, Jesus' friends are described as his "companions on the way." Etymologically, a companion is someone with whom we eat. Seafarers who come to our centres are our physical companions. Because of His death and resurrection, we have many other spiritual ones. People we shall never know are our companions, for they share the same food, the Body of Christ. When we come to receive Communion on Easter Day, may we remember that we are part of this countless number of Jesus' disciples. In one of his Easter hymns, Brian Wren writes: "Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and Peace shall never end."

May you know the truth of that.

— Bishop Jeremy Ashton

Unique CD-Rom records shipboard births, deaths and marriages

A CD-Rom containing records of marine births, deaths and marriages aboard more than 1,350 coastal ships bound for Victoria between 1853 and 1920, was launched on December 14, 2001, by Attorney-general Rob Hulls, at the Mission to Seafarers chapel in Melbourne.

The disk, the first of its kind in Australia, contains 6,200 birth, death and marriage records, with more than 3,389 digital images of the original Marine Register, eliminating the need to buy certificates of marine records.

Personal papers accompanying the registration of an event have also been imaged. This means that, for example, both marriage partners could be searched for birth, death, or place of marriage details.

The image for the death registration of a seaman and death record and list of his belongings, including his passport papers could also be seen.

More than 80 invited guests filled the little chapel. Marten Syme, Maritime Historian, spoke on the early effects of immigration on Melbourne. Other invitees included: Liz Eldridge, Deputy Secretary, Legal and Equity; Andrew Levens, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages; representatives from the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies, Public Records Office and Registry volunteers. Bishop Jeremy Ashton, Rev. Ted Cosens, Fr Peter Martin, members of the Mission committee and volunteers were present.

The original painting *Clipper Ship Lightning entering Port Philip Bay, Melbourne, 1855*, by renowned marine artist Richard Linton, features on the cover of the CD, and three of his other paintings were

displayed at the Mission. Mr Linton, renowned worldwide for his historically accurate paintings, was happy to talk to guests about his work.

Following the official launch guests were given the opportunity, during morning tea in the Celia Little Room, of searching the CD for an ancestor who might have arrived in Australia by sea.

Copies of the CD are available from the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, GPO Box 4332, Melbourne 3001.

Telephone 1300369367,
Fax (03) 9603 5877,
ww.justice.vic.gov.au



The records in this bulky volume being examined at the launch by Mission to Seafarers' Geelong Chaplain Noah Park are now available on one CD.



MtS State Councillors at CD launch: Captain Charles Paulusz (left) and Rev Bill Dalling (former Chaplain at Melbourne Mission).

Golf Day nets \$1500 for Mission funds

The Seafarers' Welfare Funds of the Mission to Seafarers Victoria benefited by \$1500 from the annual Shipping Industry Golf Day in November, 2001.

The event, held at Werribee Park golf course, attracted 108 players, representing the shipping lines, transport companies, maritime lawyers, port authorities, container services and shipping media.

Many thanks to members of the organising committee for the golf day — Chairman Zainol Ahmad (MISC), Harry Noh

(MISC), Ken Drake (Skilled Maritime Services), and Thomas Holyman (Brambles Shipping).

The next Shipping Industry Golf Day is scheduled for November 29, 2002.

Pictured below: Shipping Industry Golf Day organising committee Chairman Zainol Ahmad presents the tournament's proceeds to the Chairman, Mission to Seafarers Victoria, Bishop Jeremy Ashton.



Don't forget Sea Sunday

Sea Sunday 2002 is to be held on July 14 this year. Sea Sunday material, i.e sermon notes, posters and brochures, will be available by mid-June.

For more information contact Judy Douglas on 9629 7083 or email admin@melbourne@mts.org.au

PROFILE: Keith Dann

A logical outcome after a life at sea

After a lifetime at sea and in maritime management ashore, Keith Dann is now spending his retirement as volunteer Chairman and Lay Coordinator of the Westernport Mission to Seafarers centre at Hastings.

Hastings is one of three outlying Victorian Missions, the others being Geelong and Portland.

The progress was almost inevitable. Keith comes from a family with a long seafaring tradition and was brought up in an English east coast village

where virtually every family had some maritime connection. His mother was secretary of the local Mission and their church heard regular sermons from the visiting chaplain.

Keith went to sea as a deck cadet and rose to command, gaining an Extra Master's Certificate.

In 1954 while his ship was at Port Pirie, he met Pat, a Mission volunteer who is now his wife — and still a volunteer. They lived in England for nine years then



Keith and Pat Dann, stalwarts of the Hastings Mission.

came back to Australia, where Keith joined a navigation school in Melbourne, and also took up volunteer work with the Mission.

Later, Keith was involved with the Australian conference on changes to the shipping industry, then took up managerial positions with the Ports and Harbours Authority and with the Port of Melbourne in charge of navigational services before he retired in 1989.

Today, Keith and Pat, in conjunction with Stella Maris

and the Uniting Church, are aided by 41 volunteers, including Vice-Chairman Eddy Tearle, his wife Terese, and Trish Fox, in providing services to seafarers at berths in Westernport Bay from Crib Point to Hastings.

Together, they look after the interests of more than 1200 seafarers a year.

Hastings Mission, with its cheerful, modern interior, provides full services including canteen, fax, telephone and email, a pool table, table tennis and television.

THANK YOU

Sincere thanks to these donors who have contributed to generously to the work of the Mission to 5 March 2002:

Anglican
Emmanuel Church,
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Anglican Ladies
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Anglican Parish of
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Parish of St James,
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dores

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Rayment, Dr D

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Skilled Maritime
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Wilson, JC

Wong, J



From left: Ron Reid, Barbara Bedford, Elizabeth Fiddian and Padre Ted Cosens

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Seafarers' Welfare Fund

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information on
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Donations of
\$2.00 or more
are tax
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Visitors travel memory lane at Mission

Ron Reid was watching the 7.30 ABC news in October last year and saw the report of the International Year of Volunteers celebration being held at the Melbourne Mission.

He called and asked to visit the Mission because during his research into his family history he had discovered that his great grandfather, Hugh R. Reid, had been on the Executive Committee of the Mission early last century and was also Harbour Trust Commissioner in 1906.

Elizabeth Fiddian, a former member of the Ladies Harbour Lights Guild and her friend Barbara Bedford happened to be there on the same day to tour the building and share memories of earlier times.