

# The Master's Mariner



CHRISTMAS EDITION 2023

News from *Mission to Seafarers*

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## In 2023, our Centre welcomed 5500+ seafarers from over 60 nations!



*Some seafarers will be spending Christmas with their families, but most won't be.*

**The Need:** Further concern over seafarer welfare has been raised by the results of the latest Seafarers Happiness Index, which reveals a further drop in seafarer happiness and marks the longest sustained decline since the index was founded. It shows an overall fall in seafarer happiness to just 6.6 out of 10. For more details see:

<https://splash247.com/seafarers-happiness-index-suffers-its-longest-decline/>

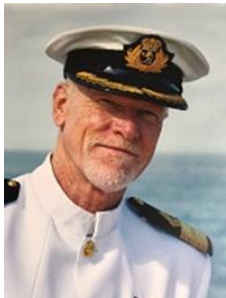
### **Our Response: Christmas Appeal**

We aim to meet our 2021 record of giving out over 2000 Christmas gift bags to visiting seafarers in December to give seafarers far away from home some joy. As a special gift, we have chosen sunglasses - if you've ever lost a pair of sunglasses overboard, you will understand why being 2000km from the nearest store is an issue. Any funds not needed for the gift bags will help us to continue to provide our wellbeing services offering hope and renewal.

## ***It's not Elves who bring Christmas Gifts to our island nation – it's Seafarers!***

Help those far from home this Christmas feel appreciated – please support our **Seafarers Christmas Gift Appeal** - click here or return our giving card (enclosed).

<https://missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au/donate/#donate>



### **Christopher 'Kit' Rynd Joins MTS Sydney Board**

The MTS Sydney Board has welcomed its newest volunteer: maritime consultant, former Captain of the cruise liners Queen Elizabeth 2 and Queen Mary 2, and retired Commodore, Christopher 'Kit' Rynd. He said: "With shorter turnaround times, the work of MTS is more important than ever, for both health and security reasons." To find out more about his over 45 years at sea, see our website: <https://missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au/commodore-rynd-joins-mts-syd-board/>

**Everyone welcome –**  
**MTS Sydney Christmas and Thanksgiving Celebration**

Sat November 25 | St Anne's Ryde | 2–4pm  
Details and pl. rsvp at: <https://bit.ly/MTSChristmasEvent23>

**Celebration questions and/or RSVPs also welcome via phone: 92413009**  
**or email:** [enquiries@missiontoseafarers.org.au](mailto:enquiries@missiontoseafarers.org.au) or rsvp at: [www.bit.ly/MTSChristmasEvent23](http://www.bit.ly/MTSChristmasEvent23)



## Message – Rev Un Tay, Principal Chaplain



2023 has been a terrific year of caring for seafarers with compassion thanks to our small, dedicated team and our generous volunteers and donors. Every year I really look forward to coming together at our Christmas Thanksgiving Celebration and giving thanks for the many blessings throughout the year! Please join us on Saturday, 25 November 2023 – thank you to St Anne’s Ryde Anglican Church for hosting us once again. We will have a special focus on “Caring for Carers”. More details and RSVP at: [www.bit.ly/MTSChristmasEvent23](http://www.bit.ly/MTSChristmasEvent23) or phone us here at the Mission.

### Let’s show Seafarers we care

A seafarers’ life is always challenging and dangerous. They spend many months away from family and friends. When we can give them gift bags to express our appreciation for their hard work bringing the goods we need to Australia, we know by their smiles that they are feeling God’s love too. Thank you for all your support and donations and prayers throughout the year. We hope our Christmas Gift Bag Appeal can bless many of them this year also.

### MTS Missions Working Together

I recently had a call from Chaplain, Rev Inni, MtS Melbourne informing me that the Chief Cook of the Singaporean cargo ship Kota Laris had collapsed and died while Rev Inni was on board. Rev Inni provided assistance and pastoral support to the traumatised crew. He was calling to request that I visit them when the vessel called at Port Botany on Sunday. On the day, I met the crew onboard including close friends of the Chief Cook, allowing them to express their grief, fears and share their reflections. When asking how the crew were coping with meal times, I discovered that there were six nationalities on board, and they were taking turns to cook food from their homelands. The new Chief cook will come on board in Brisbane. Thank God for the crew comforting each other in this way and working together at this tough time. They need our continued prayers.

### Respecting Their Sacrifices

Our Chair Robert Dunn, Board member John Bradley and I attended the 33rd Annual Commemoration National Merchant Navy War Memorial Service on Sunday 22 October 2023 at Kings Park, Canberra. It is important to pause and remember this time when our commercial shipping and crews were drawn into war — with many merchant seamen paying the ultimate sacrifice.

### Thank you from Seafarers on Fathers Day – and beyond



**(pictured)** On Father’s Day, Chaplain Retchie was invited by the Captain to conduct a Liturgical Service for the Filipino crew and spoke about Jesus’ heart for seafarers. Chaplain Retchie was taken for a tour to pray for vessel and invited to join everyone for lunch. They sent photos and videos as a thank you.

**Above and Beyond:** Chaplain Retchie said a recent highlight had been helping an Indian lady from Wollongong to see her brother on his ship. The Terminal Access paperwork took a lot of time, but after Chaplain Retchie’s direct request to the Captain, it was possible for her to be escorted by security to the vessel and spend time with her brother whom she hasn’t seen for so many months. She was so thankful for our service.

**Thank you to everyone who entered our ‘Welcome to Our New Website Competition’.** We are happy to announce that we were able to provide the free passes to the Aust. National Maritime Museum, Sydney, to everyone who took the time to enter by sending us their feedback on the new site. Winners were notified by email.



## 2023 Highlights: This year our small team of Chaplains, staff and volunteers:

- ❖ Returned to opening our Centre and providing regular bus services **7 days a week!**  
*Although we have transported over 5500 seafarers since January, this is less than before covid, so our shop revenue and donations are down. However we have prioritised to maintain our 7 day service.*
- ❖ Supported seafarers from over 60 nationalities with very diverse needs;  
*This has included helping them to find emergency accommodation, ways to address lack of access to water, contacts to help with wage underpayment to psychological support after the loss of a child.*
- ❖ Visited over 210 seafarers in need on vessels, in hospitals and hotels.  
*We listened, gave support, hope, practical help and prayer on request;*
- ❖ Provided a pickup point in our Centre for over 300 parcels of goods to improve life for Seafarers;
- ❖ Delivered over \$10,000 worth of purchased and donated goods directly to vessels – including our much appreciated gift bags for special occasions.

*We continue to do whatever we can to show Gods love to Seafarers from all over the world and thank our donors and volunteers for your support, because that's what makes it all possible.*

## End of an Era – Farewell Chaplain Jack

After more than 15 years serving at our Mission, not just the staff, but returning seafarers, will miss the loving service of our multi-talented Chaplain Jack Starmans.

Jack was often the first to offer to stay up all night with suffering seafarers. He was the one who actioned the urgent email request to find a replacement mobile phone at 7am on a Sunday. The seafarer desperately wanted one before his ship sailed as his had fallen overboard that night.

Jack has filled thousands of gift bags, sorted mountains of parcels, shared our news with visitors delivering beanies and changed light bulbs.

Having experienced hard times himself, Chaplain Jack was exceptionally compassionate towards seafarers who needed support, friendship, a pool lesson or a song! There was not much that Chaplain Jack wouldn't do for a seafarer in need.

In his holidays, he could often be found serving people in remote, impoverished parts of NSW. In retirement, Jack plans to continue to do so. Wherever God leads him next, we know he will continue to share messages of joy and hope, through words, actions and music.

Jack has a fondness for Youtube, so as a tribute, here is what Jack did for just one seafarer - some stories can't be filmed so we hope you don't mind listening:

<https://youtu.be/MrOhMOw-V8I>

And seafarers or anyone missing Jack's music can still enjoy it. Visit his Youtube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@jackstarmans7571>

*Image: Chaplain Eddy welcoming Captain Albert*

*Visit 'What People Say' on our new website to hear Captain Albert sharing his thoughts on MTS Centres around the globe - after 18 yrs of visits!*



## Meet Our Team: Eddy Wee

Retired Anglican Minister Eddy Wee (right), who has been volunteering for us, has joined us as our new Chaplain (part-time).

A former marketing executive, Eddy shocked his Singaporean parents by following his calling to join the Ministry. After studying at Moore College, he moved to Sydney to accept an invitation to lead the West Sydney Chinese Christian Church and then he served at Cabramatta Anglican.

He said he loves being at our Mission because "it is an amazing place. You get the chance to connect with people from all over the world and to listen to them – and give support and hope."

*Have you ever considered leaving a legacy?* 

## ***New Partnership Makes it Easy – Free Legal Will Service!***

**We have found a new way to bless both seafarers and our supporters - we have teamed up with GatheredHere, Australia's most trusted online will platform to offer you a free online will!**

This means you can write a legal, reliable will for free – and update it for free as often as you like, for life! You can choose if you would like to leave a legacy through a gift to your favourite charity and if you do – we hope you choose us! You can even choose not to leave a charitable donation and still benefit from this free service.

*If you choose to pledge a gift to us in your will, you will be helping to ensure the good work we have been doing for seafarers visiting Sydney since 1881 can continue for many generations to come!*

Sometimes it's the people with simple circumstances that delay writing or updating a will. Doing it online is not only fast and free, but it allows you to include extra details like who should care for your pets or the family photo records.

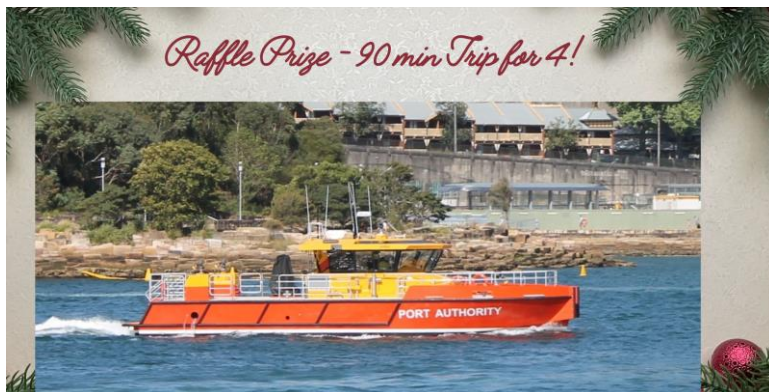
*A gift in a will is a valuable way to continue to show your love for seafarers, even when you can no longer do so personally - and it won't cost you anything during your lifetime.*



*Crew of the NAVIG8 Wolf saying thanks to our supporters*

A will is the best way to save your loved ones emotional and financial stress during an already difficult time. See: <https://wills.gatheredhere.com.au/c/mission-to-seafarers-sydney>

Or find out more at our website: <https://missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au/bequests-leave-a-legacy/>



## **Enter Christmas Raffle!**

Win a prize money can't buy – a 90 minute trip for 4 on the Port Authority's BRAND NEW Firefighting vessel!

*Also available as a gift voucher. A fabulous adventure for you and your family - or wow the grandkids.*

Max. 4 people aged over 8 years, to be taken on a summer Saturday before March 30, 2024.

**Visit our website for tickets or more details - <https://bit.ly/MTSRaffle23>**

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES for this prize donation!**

## **Congratulations Port Kembla – Winners DCN Seafarers Welfare Award**

We were a finalist too, but no one could beat the Port Kembla Port Community this year for uniting to replace the MTS Port Kembla mini-bus in only 10 days! Thank you to the **Daily Cargo News** and Major Host Sponsor **NSW Ports** for bringing the shipping industry together at the **DCN 2023 Australian Shipping & Maritime Industry Awards** night. For the mini-bus story see:

<https://missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au/port-kembla-community-helps-local-mission/>

For all the Awards' winners see: <https://www.thedcn.com.au>

### **To Donate to our Seafarers Christmas Gift Bag Appeal:**

i) select 'donate' on our website – this generates an instant receipt OR complete the enclosed giving card. *Thank you for whatever you are able to do!*

