

## THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS

### Report to Synod for 2015



#### Port of Tauranga

No. of ships visited by all chaplaincy and volunteer ship visiting personnel for each port where we are represented (Mission to Seafarer personnel only, not kindred society personnel) – 532 no. of visitors to each centre for the full year- 14,285  
Short narrative on issues dealt with regarding seafarers' welfare during the year-

- The Vega Auriga was in Port for upwards of 3 months, we were the 'safe haven' for the affected Seafarers.

#### Other welfare issues dealt with

- Contracts, personal safety, homesickness, hospitalization, spouse at home ill, concerns re safety of families in Philippines, non-payment of salaries, ensuing retirement.
- Following and injury while boarding a vessel, I am now only Ship Visiting re Pastoral situations when required. I find that I can relate and connect with the Seafarers much more effectively by being available at the Centre in the evenings. The bulk of our ship visiting is a PR role and done by volunteers, informing the Seafarers of the Centre, its whereabouts, outreach, and services available. Visitors also take a supply of magazines and copies of 'The Sea' for the mess. Any Seafarers on board are usually too busy to chat. They are much more relaxed and open when they visit the centre.

#### Comments regarding financial status of the Mission.

USM is a joint venture centre. The major portion of the income comes from sources other than the 3 contributing partners. It would be fair to say that the USM treads a fine line financially and only very prudent stewardship of the resources has meant a good outcome has been achieved.

#### Challenges for 2015

There has been a change of Manager and the departure of some long standing volunteers. The numbers passing through the centre continue to increase due to the success of the port in attracting contracts, particularly Maersk, a general increase in various agricultural exports, the log trade, and summer Cruise Liners. Funding requirements for 2015, and whether grant funding is required – Under our new management we may see requests and new ideas forthcoming that will require funding.

Marie Gilpin  
Chaplain MTS at Port of Tauranga

#### Napier

Ship visits: 3  
Centre visitors: 2926

Ministry to the welfare of seafarers at the port of Napier is an entirely volunteer affair, conducted under the auspices of the Hawkes Bay Seafarers Welfare Society Incorporated. That Society succeeds in representing the interests of Mts, Apostleship of the Sea and Sailors' Society, in about

equal measure. Nobody is paid for anything they do, and the organisation runs on the proverbial smell of an oily rag.

The panel of some 30 volunteers ensures that the Napier Seafarers' Centre is open to welcome seafarers every evening of the year that any ships are in port.

Through 2014 we have had the advantage of a Bishop's Oversight Committee for the MtS' work at Napier. This committee is chaired by Rev'd Steve Hayes, whose personal energy has kept our ministry on track during difficult times. An important outcome of Steve's and his Committee's work is a much enhanced awareness of maritime ministry among Anglicans of the port's hinterland.

MtS activity during the year 2014 has been handicapped by the illness of your chaplain. Placed on chemotherapy for multiple myeloma in late 2013, his problems were compounded by severe nerve damage to his legs and feet, which meant he spent much of 2014 re-learning how to walk. Into the vacuum so created, certain Anglican clergy have willingly stepped in to carry out essential functions: conducting the monthly service at the Centre, delivering special packages at Christmas and Easter, and responding to a crew's request for an Easter Day on-board Eucharist. The various contributions of Rev'ds Steve Hayes, Noel Hendery and Howard Pilgrim are gratefully acknowledged.

It is appropriate also to acknowledge the support of a particular Anglican parish in the town – Taradale – whose Missionary Service League has spearheaded efforts to make seafarers feel welcome when they visit Napier. The Parish also plans to experiment with a Summer Sea Sunday in 2015, holding it on the first Sunday in February with a picnic event at the Seafarers' Centre.

The Rotary Club of Ahuriri Sunrise continues to support our activities. A focus for that interest is the annual breakfast at the Centre that we provide to enable their members to actually view the sunrise which features in their club's name.

During 2014 the Port Company, who sponsor our IT operations, restructured the Centre's internet system. This has provided not only more and faster WiFi connections, but provides volunteers with a 24/7 help desk – which they've only had to use once but it's there for when they need it.

Richard J Spence  
MtS Chaplain

### **Gisborne**

Development of a new ship visiting service to seafarers at, and the potential development of a Seafarers' Centre at that port.

Following discussions by Mr Peter Snow of Wellington with officers of Gisborne port, and the Regional Dean, Rev Stephen Donald in June 2014, Stephen was able to organise a number of local clergy, including the Catholic Priest in charge at Gisborne, for two days of training in ship visiting, led by Chaplain Bob Peters from Wellington and your Chairman.

Since then, negotiations have been ongoing regarding clearance for the clergy to go through the port and board ships.

Stephen has now conducted a number of ship visits, but there is still more work to be done regarding the protocols for visiting ships at the port.

Meanwhile, there is enthusiasm within the port fraternity to develop a small seafarers' Centre and discussions are in their infancy at this time.