

The Mariners' Lifeline

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN MARINERS' WELFARE SOCIETY (ABN 86 000 008 122)

Founded 1863 as the Sydney Sailors' Home.

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Captain Alan Tait, OAM - Chairman, The Australian Mariners' Welfare Society

Chairman's report.

Having now been a Councillor of the Society for more than 25 years, the last 14 as its Chairman, I take some pride in what our team of Councillors has achieved over that period through its support for welfare organisations that assist visiting mariners, irrespective of nationality or faith.

This support has included ongoing financial assistance to The Apostleship of the Sea (Stella Maris Clubs), The Mission to Seafarers and other welfare providers located at all ports around the Australian coast.

The Society entered 2019 embracing change, a good example being grants now being extended to enable installation of solar panels at a number of seafarer missions. This not only helps to contain stations' running costs but in the long run will assist in reducing the effects of global warming.

We have also provided numerous scholarships for Australian seafarers for study at various nautical training institutions and colleges throughout the country. Sponsorship of young people to undertake voyages in Australian-based sail training ships has continued; these are deep-sea ventures which focus on personal development, building an individual's self-confidence and stress the importance of teamwork.

In my message in the last newsletter I mentioned that the Society was establishing a perpetual award to commemorate the outstanding service to the Society by the late Jim Israel, who served as a Councillor from 1983-2008 including 10 years as our Chairman. It is pleasing to report that the inaugural recipient of the James Israel Memorial Award was a young lady who made a voyage as youth crew in the Sail Training Ship Young Endeavour in May 2019, subsequently telling us how much the experience had benefitted her.

In company with some of our Councillors, I am in regular contact with the residents living in our two home units in Horizon Towers in Hornsby (NSW) and am pleased to report both are in good form.

At our Annual General Meeting in May, Graham Lightfoot AM, our Deputy Chairman stepped down after 28 years' outstanding service. A tribute to Graham appears elsewhere in this issue.

In Graham's place the meeting unanimously elected David Parmeter. He recently retired as CEO of Teekay Shipping (Australia) Pty Ltd. and was also appointed Chairman of Maritime Industry Australia Ltd. In addition, it has recently been announced that David has been appointed as the new chair of the Asian Shipowners' Association, an organisation whose membership is said to control about 50% of the world's merchant fleet.

Links which our Councillors have with maritime organisations such as these keep us in touch with shipping

developments and inform our current thinking in the rapidly changing shipping environment.

These changes in our Board is a reminder to me how fortunate the Society is to have such a committed and harmonious group who collectively bring to the table wide knowledge and experience in maritime-related fields and I thank them for their continuing loyalty and support.

Pleasingly, as was reported at the AGM, our organisation continues in good financial shape. I look forward to actively maintaining progress in pursuing our aims and also express thanks and good wishes to all our members.

Alan Tait
Chairman.



David Parmeter

AMWS Chairman inducted into the Daily Cargo News' (DCN) 2018 Hall of Fame.



The Hall of Fame 2018 Inductee, Captain Alan Tait, AMWS' Chairman, with Holman Fenwick & Willan's Managing Partner, Gavin Vallely (left) and Graham Lightfoot, AMWS' Deputy Chairman (right).

Graham received the 2018 'Highly Commended Seafarers Welfare Award' on behalf of AMWS. Everybody associated with the AMWS congratulate Alan on his outstanding achievement.

Graham Lightfoot AM. A career and life dedicated to the Australian Shipping Industry, Seafarers & the General Public.

In a typical understatement, Graham says his career in shipping was the classic story of office boy to Managing Director.

Graham commenced his career with the agency of Gibbs Bright in Adelaide in 1950, and retired in 1996 in Sydney as Managing Director of one of the iconic British shipping lines, Blue Star Line. His career is one of achievement and success.

In the late 1960s he was the West Australian State Manager for ACTA Shipping, and it was during this tenure that he played a significant role in the introduction of



Graham and his late wife, Shirley, celebrating their 60th Wedding Anniversary in November 2016.

containerisation in that State. In March 2019 Graham returned to Fremantle to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the arrival of the first international container ship, Overseas Container Ltd's (OCL) 'Encounter Bay' in that Port.

In 1970 Graham was transferred to Sydney to take up the position of ACTA Shipping's NSW State Manager, and in 1974 was appointed

General Manager in Australia for Blue Star Line, and later was appointed Managing Director.

Whilst visiting the Middle East in August 1990 as part of an Australian trade delegation, he was 'detained' by the Iraqi Government following its invasion of Kuwait, and was not released until four months later. A spell in a foreign hospital while travelling also helped him with an understanding of the hazards of life away from home.

Between 1982 and 1987 Graham was the National President of the Australian Chamber of Shipping, and held other important Shipping Industry and Trade positions during the 1980s and 1990s.

During the latter stages of his career and since his retirement, he has dedicated a large amount of his time to the welfare of seafarers through his membership of the Australian Mariners' Welfare Society (AMWS), the Sydney Bethel Union and the Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund.

Graham states that the driving factor behind his interest and dedication to seafarers' welfare was his long career on the shore-side of the shipping industry from where he could witness the stresses and strains that seafarers have to endure whilst at sea – being unable to be with their families and loved-ones to celebrate anniversaries, Christmas and other festivities which people on shore take for granted.

In 1991 he joined AMWS, and in May 2019 stepped down from the role of Deputy Chairman which Graham had held for ten years. In 2006 the AMWS Board accepted Graham's recommendation that the Society introduce a Project Grant Scheme. Since then the Society has distributed over \$1.5 million to stations around Australia run by the Apostleship of the Sea and the Mission to Seafarers. These costs include the refurbishment of stations, station equipment, the installations and maintenance of internet systems, the part-purchase of buses to ensure that seafarers have transport when visiting an Australian port, and the major proportion of the costs of replacing the bus' tyres, to mention just a few areas of the financial assistance provide by the AMWS.

This Scheme enabled the AMWS to continue its primary function of caring for seafarers. A function that it has continually performed since its formation in 1863.

In addition, he joined the Sydney Bethel Union in 1995. This organisation, founded in Sydney in 1822, has similar ideals to the AMWS, but focuses on the spiritual as well as the physical needs of seafarers which reflects the life-long association Graham has had with the Church. The work of the Bethel Union is confined to the ports in NSW.

Graham joined this organisation in 1995 and was appointed the Chairman of the Sydney Bethel Union from 2002 until his retirement from that position in 2014, when he reverted back to being a Trustee, a position he retains to this day.

As well as his work for seafarers, Graham's interest and concern with the general community is reflected in his membership of the Rotary organisation. He joined the Sydney Cove Rotary Club on its formation in 1986, becoming the second Club President shortly afterwards. Graham was awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship, one of the highest Rotary awards to be granted to members, and is now an Honorary member of the club which allows him to still keep in contact with the Club's activities.

In his spare time, he has managed to fit in time for bowls and other interests.

Even when running a shipping line, Graham has always made himself available to consider and recommend on issues that benefit the needs of others with his dedication, professionalism and humility.

Now in his eighties, he shows no signs of slowing down!

*Martin Orchard
Sydney, April 2019*

AMWS Councillors 'Out and About'!



AMWS Councillor Tony Cousins and 'Windeward Bound' Director Chris Bennett at the Australian Wooden Boat Festival.

AMWS Councillor Tony Cousins and Hobart Mission To Seafarers volunteer Capt. Dion Dillon on the iconic Hobart waterfront.



AMWS Chairman Alan Tait (right) and Deputy Chairman, Graham Lightfoot (left) with Ti-anna on 'Young Endeavour' in Sydney Harbour. Ti-anna is the first recipient of the James Israel Memorial Scholarship.



AMWS Councillor Martin Orchard (left) and Deputy Chairman Graham Lightfoot (right) with Carol Shannon, CEO Leeuwin Ocean Adventures, on board 'Leeuwin II' in the Port of Fremantle.



'Leeuwin II' in the Port of Fremantle.



A letter from a recipient of a 2019 Australian Mariners Welfare Society Scholarship

The AMWS Chairman & Councillors were very moved by this letter addressed to them from Vannessa who is studying a Bachelor of Engineering (Maritime Engineering) with Honours at the Australian Maritime College, Launceston.

Vannessa is one of the recipients of a 2019 AMWS Scholarship, and wrote:

When I tell people what I am studying and what my aspirations are being in the maritime industry, I am unfortunately confronted with disappointing reactions ranging from disbelief to words of discouragement because as a woman I should play it "safe". During the beginning of my quest to get into the industry, I was deeply hurt by the lack of support, not financially, but morally. The barriers have never been physical but have been people's attitudes and perception of what a marine or maritime engineer should look like. By you having granted me this scholarship, I genuinely feel vindicated that I do belong in this industry and that I do have support and that as a woman in the industry, I do matter.

Having grown up in a restrictive environment for women, I always wished to be a man – not because of their physical attributes but due to their privilege of being allowed to be whatever and whomever they chose to be. The first time I was inspired to enter the industry I was rejected different marine programs all over the world. Excuses given ranged from being a woman to them not having faith that I could do complex mathematical and technical calculations. The hinderance I faced was because no one believed in me. In life, there is so much self-belief one can have until the environment and the people around you drown your dreams (pun very much intended). Luckily enough for me, my parents encouraged me to apply to the Australian Maritime College. I was accepted, and it was a dream come true as the AMC is the best in its field in the southern hemisphere.

I was very self-conscious because I felt like an imposter – being a woman amongst a male dominated field. However, the support I have received from the institute and the University of Tasmania has been more than I expected. The teaching staff have gone an extra mile to help me build my confidence and feel accepted.

I finally feel I have a seat at the table because of your scholarship. The reason being that the scholarship is like a vote of confidence from you to me. The scholarship symbolizes hope and inclusion. The scholarship (irrespective of the amount) is a bold statement to other upcoming female maritime and marine specialists that we are equally important and needed in industry just as much. This scholarship is a beacon of inspiration to the journey that I have come thus far. This scholarship is a legacy capstone for diversity and giving everyone a fair go. I am truly honoured to have been entrusted with this scholarship and I will endeavour to pay it forward.

I would like in the next 10 years to be one of the female pioneers in the marine and maritime technology advancement and safety protocols to ensure that all seafarers are safer while off shore. Also, I want to put Australia on the map as a force to be reckoned with when it comes to input in maritime legislature from structures to seafarer rights in the world arena. I want the maritime industry to be more inclusive and hopefully start programs to encourage women to get involved. I also want to one

day start a free educational voyage program for underprivileged youth to open a world of possibility to those that think it's only for the rich.

I came from humble beginnings, scared and having no one to guide me, but with a heart full of ambition knowing that one day that my dream of being a maritime engineer, and hopefully one day work for the Australian government in the maritime sector, will be realised.

Before you awarded me this scholarship, I was a lone sinking ship in the rough seas – hoping to see land and finally dock. But now, your scholarship has become a lighthouse in my life – a ray of light, direction and calling that I am home and ready for repair for the seas again.

I would like to thank you from the depths of my heart and soul. I would like to thank you for your upliftment. I would like to thank you for planting a seed that shall germinate, grow and produce abundant fruit through the lives I will impact. This scholarship has become a stepping stone to a brighter future. It's not the amount, but it is about what it represents: a better tomorrow for women in maritime.

If there are any programs or projects that help other people like me, that your organisation is part of, I would like to be involved.

Thanking you once again

I leave you this quote as it reflects the tenacity I have always abided by when it came to pursuing a career in a male dominated industry. Despite the naysayers telling me to play it safe, I took the leap of faith and now with your scholarship, my voyage into my career has gained new sails.

"The boat is safer anchored at the port; but that's not the aim of boats." Paulo Coelho.

*Sincerest and Kindest Regards,
Vannessa.*



Vannessa

The Mission to Seafarers Australian Conference: Brisbane 2019.

The following is an edited version of information received from Graham Miller, the Honorary Secretary of the Australian Council of The Mission to Seafarers Inc. :

The MtS family in Australia will gather in Brisbane from Sunday 8th to Friday 13th September for the bi-ennial national conference, hosted this year by MtS Brisbane centre.

The theme for this conference is 'ONE BODY WITH MANY MEMBERS' a Biblical quote from 1st Corinthians 12:12 in the New Testament.

As a prelude to the conference there are two services in St. John's Anglican Cathedral, Brisbane on the Sunday morning with the MtS Secretary General, The Revd Andrew Wright from the UK., preaching at the Choral Eucharist at 9.00 am, and the Dean of Durham Cathedral, preaching at the Seafarers Annual Memorial Service at 11.30 am. The official commencement of the conference begins that night at the Pullman Hotel Conference Centre, Brisbane Airport.

Delegates from around the country will be joined by the seven Global Regional Directors worldwide who are also meeting in Brisbane during the week for discussions on the international work of the Mission with its 200 ports. This year

the Mission has asked that Chaplains and Management be represented as specialist presenters address important issues for the future development of the ministry to the people of the sea and their families.

The Australian Council of the MtS also gratefully acknowledges organisations and supporters who are invited to our conferences with the AMWS our oldest and most generous donor. We encourage each centre hosting these conferences to broaden local knowledge of the work of the Mission by inviting local participation.

One of the UK Trustees of the MtS, The Venerable Andrew Tremlett, Dean of Durham Cathedral UK, will be present at the conference along with the Sec General to meet with the region he represents on the UK Board of the Mission.

There will also be representation of the Apostleship of the Sea [Stella Maris] joining us at the conference to take our combined maritime ministry further together.

The theme of 'one body with many members' is indicative of the membership of the worldwide Mission ministry to seafarers with twenty-eight ministries, and/or centres around the Australian coastline. Most are set up as MtS centres, but some share the seafaring ministry with sister organisations.

Meeting bi-ennially with our Liaison bishops, Bp John Stead from South Australia and Bp Gary Nelson from NW Australia; and Rev Canon Garry Dodd, the Regional Director MtS Australia, we use the conference to re-invigorate ourselves and our ministry with seafarers, through prayer and study, discussion and learning and social interaction.

Today's seafarer brings complex issues to our ship visitors, clergy and volunteers beyond that of a purely spiritual nature. We hear cries for help in issues of justice and welfare, of unjust work practices and mental health, of depression and abuse. Everyone who visits seafarers on board, or has crew speak quietly to them in our centres understands this. This is important as we see the commonality of what we see and hear daily in our work of caring.

At a recent ICMA [International Christian Maritime Association] training conference in Sydney, the combined ministries of the MtS and the AoS from Australian and New Zealand noted that the ministry to seafarers faced future changes –

- through our involvement with each other,
- with the development of further port welfare committees,
- in dealing with bureaucracy regarding seafarer welfare,
- in seeking government / industry funding for ministry and/or education,
- in developing mentoring / intern programs,
- with furthering self-education in maritime ministry,
- for accepting new outreach to other forms of seafaring,
- in dealing with new challenges that have not yet been identified, etc.

The September conference then, will work at how the 'many members' can assist each other to work as a functioning body for the continued welfare and spiritual care of the seafaring men and women of the world.

New survey from ICS and ECSA paints positive picture for seafarer internet access.

May 22, 2019

The following is an edited version of an article recently released by ISWAN (International Seafarers' Welfare & Assistance Network):

A new survey from the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the European Community Shipowners'

Associations (ECSA) reveals that not only is internet access for seafarers for personal use on board ships more widespread and available than previously imagined, but also that the positive benefits associated with this access outweigh the feared safety concerns around the technology.

The responses to the survey carried out by ICS and ECSA, with support from the Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA), indicate that the provision of internet access to seafarers for personal use may have improved the mental health and well-being of seafarers (according to 60% of respondents) and the morale of seafarers in the company (according to 69% of respondents). 82% of those organisations who responded provide internet access to seafarers for personal use. Despite industry concerns that internet access may negatively impact upon seafarers obtaining adequate rest and sleep during periods available for rest, 85% of these companies reported that this has been unaffected or improved. Similarly, whilst there have also been concerns expressed as to whether internet access may negatively or positively impact upon the work performance of seafarers, 96% of companies reported that this has not deteriorated.

In addition the majority of companies reported that the number of incidences of seafarers seeking assistance due to family or home-related anxieties have stayed the same, despite speculation that increased communications with family might generate more anxieties about problems ashore. On another positive note, the vast majority of companies (93%) responded that the number of reported incidences of online bullying and harassment have not increased, despite speculation that greater internet access might expose seafarers to this behaviour.

The responses indicate that the two primary reasons for not providing internet to seafarers are concerns about the costs involved (68%) and concerns about the potential impact on rest/sleep (60%).

The survey on the provision of internet access to seafarers for personal use on board ships received responses by 276 operators with 11,665 ships, representing 14% of the world fleet, with a profile of respondents closely reflecting that of the world fleet.

Roger Harris, Executive Director of ISWAN, said: 'We warmly welcome the report and its findings. However, more still needs to be done to ensure that all seafarers gain access to cheap and fast internet while they are at sea.'

We need your assistance!

To ensure you receive the future editions of this newsletter, it is important to AMWS that our mailing list is kept up-to-date. To help us in this task, we request our readers to ensure that our Secretary, Stan Moriarty, is kept informed of any changes of your address or to the addressees that appear on the envelope. In addition, if you currently receive 'The Mariners' Lifeline' by post but would like to receive all future editions electronically via email, then please advise Stan Moriarty of your email address.

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We thank you for your attention to these matters.