

SHIP TO SHORE



Port Hedland Seafarers Centre

December 2015

Issue 4

Christmas preparations underway,

The tradition continues.

Christmas preparations are well underway. Last Saturday, 5th Dec, about 60 people gathered to put together 1500 Christmas Gift Bags and 40 Christmas Hampers, for those Seafarers in port or out at anchorage, on Christmas Day. Some of our suppliers provide items at discounted prices or as a donation. Other businesses, companies and individuals provide financial support to allow us to show God's love, and a sense of family to the Seafarers unable to be with their own families at Christmas.

Gift Bag Stuffing Day

This is always a special time, with participants from BHP, FMG, the Port Authority, local churches and community members giving their time to lovingly put gift bags together for those so far from home. Many families, older and young members alike, join in the fun and fellowship as the many hands fill 1500 bags in just a few very quick hours

Delivery Day

On Christmas Eve hampers and gift bags are delivered to vessels at anchorage that will not be in port Christmas Day. These are delivered either by helicopter or launch. Gift bags and hampers will also be delivered to vessels in port that are expected to leave Christmas Eve or early Christmas Day.

Then, at 0700 Christmas morning a launch goes from vessel to vessel, in port to hand over gift bags for each crew member, and to invite all the Seafarers to the Centre for Christmas lunch. Again, a band of staff prepare lunch for the Seafarers and some will stay on to share in day. Our day then finishes at 1700 and spouses that can share dinner and some time together to round off the day.

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Valuable Help

We have again been blessed to have some volunteers come and help out at the Centre.

Viv & Heather Pollard:

Viv and Heather came over Tamworth, NSW, in April to paint our staff houses. They spent 4 weeks painting our 3 staff residences.

We are so grateful for the seemingly endless hours spent painting as this lovely couple toiled day after day, battling aching muscles and the Pilbara dust and warm weather, to achieve their goals. It is amazing the difference a lick of paint makes. The houses all look so much fresher, thanks to Viv and Heather.



Judy:

Judy has become a regular visitor, to help out at the Centre. She comes over from Bermagui, N.S.W, and sometimes twice a year for the past 4 years.

Judy has known Alan & Maria for a number of years going back to their Bermagui days. She helps out in the shop, restocking and serving the Seafarers, and has become part of our Seafarers team family

A big thankyou goes to Judy for her generous gift of time year after year.

Ray and Janette Ives:

Ray and Janette first came to our attention in 2013 while they were travelling the country as BCA Nomads. BCA (Bush Church Aid) Nomads travel through remote areas volunteering their services to help out and encourage church and ministry groups and their workers. While staying on the Anglican Church grounds, Philip (Anglican minister and Seafarers committee director) suggested Ray and Janette call into the Seafarers Centre where they were able to go with Garry to visit a vessel. They were so taken by the visit and the ministry that, after talking to Alan, agreed to come back and volunteer at the Centre.

This lovely couple returned to volunteer for 13 weeks in 2014 and again for 11 weeks this year, for a combined contribution of 24 weeks of time given in their 2 visits to Port Hedland Seafarers Centre. This time has allowed our 4 married couples to have holidays with minimal disruption thanks to the retail experience Ray and Janette bring.

Ray and Janette come from Gunnedah, NSW, where they owned and operated a Furniture One store for 34½ years. Their retail experience was obvious as they dealt with the Seafarers and visitors that came into the Centre. Ray was able to help with bus driving, maintenance, ship visiting, and tour guiding, reconciling tills and serving in the Centre. While, Janette's duties included data entry, shipping/bus lists, preparing outgoing correspondence, reception work and serving in the Centre.

They shared that they really enjoyed making new friendships with staff members, which is made up of a number of nationalities. They also found it rewarding to work in a Christian environment, ship visiting with Garry and the faces of the Seafarers coming into the Centre. We do hope we see Ray and Janette back in Port Hedland as they, like Judy, have become part of our team family.

Alan will join Ray and Janette, early in 2016, to speak to BCA groups in the hope of encouraging more nomads to come and volunteer at the Centre



Meet our Staff: Kathy

Kathy grew up in Forbes NSW the eldest of 3 children. She met her husband, Garry, at high school and they married in 1982. They have 3 daughters and 5 grandchildren.

She has worked in children's ministry, including School Scripture, Kids Club, and Kids Church over a 30 year period, as her children grew up, and beyond.

Garry and Kathy left Forbes in 2002 to allow Garry to study and do ministry work in Narooma, NSW, and moved to Wagga Wagga in 2004 so Garry could complete his theological studies

with Alan as his mentor. They went to Coffs Harbour in 2006, to work at Sherwood Cliffs Drug and Alcohol Rehab, where Kathy work in the kitchen preparing meals and other kitchen duties. Then in 2011 they moved to the west, at Alans, request, to work at Port Hedland Seafarers.

She has had many duties, from working in the shop, purchasing, setting up our POS database, admin, data entry and exchange duties.

Her many hobbies include photography, scrapbooking, cross stitch and quilting.



Monthly Figures

	Sept	Oct	Nov
LAUNCH	2783	2696	2725
PORT AUTHORITY	241	259	301
CREW TXFR	5	14	3
TOTAL SEAFARERS	3029	2969	3029
VISITORS	335	449	206
HARBOUR TOURS	436	169	141
TOTAL IN CENTRE	3800	3587	3376
SHIP VISITS	16	39	22
No. TO SHOPS	2751	2571	2440

Mahesh Update

Mahesh was badly injured last year due to an accident during the tying up of his vessel. He lost his left leg below the knee. After returning to India he was fitted with a prosthetic leg. The Seafarers Centre ran a campaign to help raise funds to pay off his home, which raised over \$40,000, thanks to the generosity of many including other Seafarers, port workers, locals and visitors.

He is no longer able to work as a Seafarer and was hoping to set up a business that he and his family could operate. But nothing has happened to

this stage.

Mahesh and his wife Shruthy welcomed their first child, a son, earlier this year, and all is going well. They are considering trying to come to Australia to study and work. Please pray for God's wisdom and guidance as they look at the options for their future.



Margaret Lyons:

Margaret came to help by operating tours through peak season. She comes from the Sunshine Coast and was here about 5 months from May to September and took about 150 tours. During the busiest months of June, July and August she ran 2 tours 5 days a week and more as needed. Thanks to Margaret we were

better able to serve the growing number of tourists wanting to do the tour. Though we have only been operating a short while word has spread and our numbers have reflected the popularity of the tour. Thanks Margaret, and thanks to those who are spreading the word.



The Seafarers Life

Alan and Garry travelled to Port Walcott, 10th July, after the 2nd Officer of a vessel died suddenly. The Chaplain at Dampier was not available, so we were the next closest Centre. Garry was called back from his regular ship visiting, mid-morning, and they headed off to offer support for the Seafarers crewmates. They took care packages and SIM cards for the crew to enable them to contact love ones. Most of the crew were from Myanmar and for some this was their first contract.

There is no Seafarers Centre near this port, but it has been on the planning board for a number of years. Through this tragedy plans have been fast-tracked and we may see a Seafarers Centre in Wickham within the next 12 to 18 months, thanks to the support of Rio Tinto.

When the vessel was next in Port Hedland, Garry was able to visit and see how the Seafarers were coping. All were grateful for the support Alan and Garry were able to give them at the time of their sad loss.



Seafarers keen to join our launch and come into the Centre

Last week Alan had to deal with a very stressful situation, after a seafarer was bought in from anchorage to be repatriated to Turkey after the death of several family members.

While sailing to Australia he learned of the deaths, we believe, of his wife and 2 children due to an bombing incident. There is a possibility other members of his extended family may also have been killed or injured. This man's English was limited and in his distressed state communication was even more difficult. He did have a companion, from the ship, to travel along with him to help him.

The 2 men were in the Centre most of the day as they waited for travel arrangements to be settled.

Several times through the day he expressed the grief he was feeling. Such grief is difficult for us to imagine, as we have not had to face the situation he is facing.

Please pray for this Seafarer as he deals with this great loss. Also pray that God would send people to support him in his time of grief, and beyond.

These stories are hard but they do demonstrate the hardships the Seafarers still face day to day.

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