

From the Operations Managers Desk:

It's been a while since our last newsletter and as always, things move on and change. Christmas was our busy time again with the distribution of Christmas gifts to the Seafarers in port over that special time. This year, 60 volunteers packed 2,000 bags in one hour 20 minutes, enabling us to give gifts to 90 ships in the week leading up to Christmas and the week following. Once again, the local mining companies, Port Authority, shipping agents and local businesses contributed time and money for the effort. Special acknowledgement is due to BHP Billiton Iron Ore, Roy Hill, Fortescue Metals Group, Pharmacy 777, ASM

Eclipse and the Pilbara Ports Authority for financial assistance, and the donation of helicopter flying time from the Aviator Group. Senior management from the mining companies crewed the launch on Christmas morning, giving up their precious family time to acknowledge the seafarers. The Aust Maritime Safety Authority also assisted with the packing of the bags, and Border Force smoothed the paperwork for delivery out to the Anchorage.



The International Transport Workers Federation and the Maritime Union of Australia combined to facilitate a grant that will enable us to replace our ageing Toyota Coaster bus, and the Town of Port Hedland has granted us a contract to run the local Visitors Centre, a new challenge but also a new opportunity to spread the gospel and word about the Mission.

My time here is coming to an end, as my wife and the Centre's assistant accountant, Helen, has been diagnosed with bulbar palsy, a form of motor neurone disease. There is no cure and it is terminal, so we will take some time to be together as her condition progresses. I spent 40 years pursuing my career overseas so now it's her turn to do a few things on the wish list. We've had 44 years together, and have some more time to say our goodbyes, more than many people get when their spouse is taken suddenly. The Lord is good and His plan for all of us is good, so blessed be the name of the Lord! The Centre has advertised for a new Operations Manager who will take up the baton when I finish on 30 June. Please pray for a smooth transition and for Kathy & Garry who will carry the load during the handover. We look back with pleasure and contentment at a great ministry God provided for us here, and we look forward to the next challenge that the Lord has for us both.





From the Port Chaplain:

2018 Christmas Bag deliveries

We delivered 2000 Christmas Bags to 90 Vessels. I had privilege to deliver Christmas Bags to 17 Vessels/Ships at anchorage by helicopter. I am unable to describe the excitement of the Seafarers when they realise we are giving them Christmas presents. The majority of the Seafarers are on board for 9 months at a time. One Seafarer told me he has not been home at Christmas time to celebrate Christmas with his family for 7 years. Another Seafarer said, "It is nice to know that someone cares about us." The Good News is God Cares. John 3:16-17.



Beanies

God does not Love by words alone, He Loves by His actions. Hence our request to those who care. We are asking Church's/People to send us home made Beanies, so we can include them in the Christmas Bags for this year. Our target is 2000 Beanies (please keep in mind the majority of the Seafarers are male, so not too many pink ones please.) I would like to thank those who have sent us Beanies in the past. The Beanies are highly valued. The majority of the vessels that come to Port Hedland are going to China, from out +40 degrees to -20 degrees in North China.



Bibles

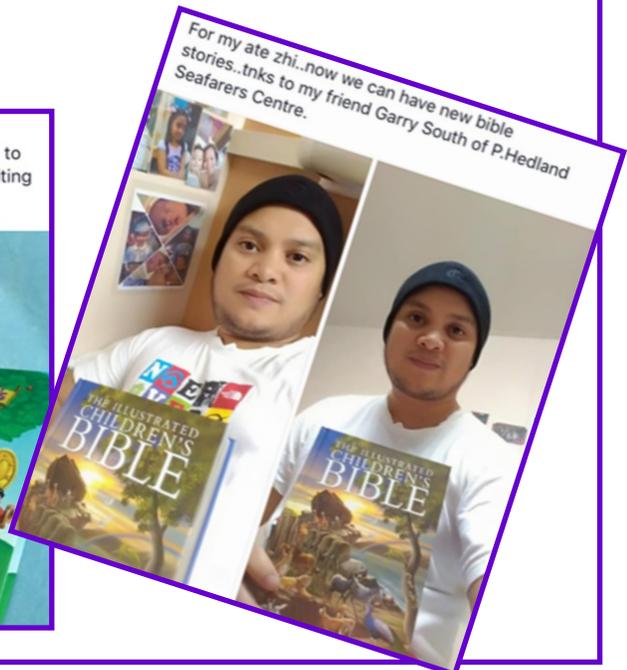
A Big Thankyou to the Bible Society for their Bible Society Grant Program of \$2000. We supply Bibles to Seafarers and their families free of charge. The MTS, (Mission To Seafarers) exists to minister to Seafarers and their families, Spiritually, Mentality & Physically. We have always given out Bibles to Seafarers.

However of the past few years we have been increasingly giving out Children's Bibles. This year we have been giving out Beginners Bibles to Seafarers with young Children and The Illustrated Bible for the older Children.

Thankyou to The Gideons who also supply us with Bibles to give to the Seafarers.

Port Chaplain;

Garry South



A Quiet Start to the Year

The first 3 months of the year always seem to be quieter, though January was not too bad, this year. February as usual was down, compared to other months. Being 2-3 days shorter makes a big difference to our numbers. March was a quiet month as we were closed for 3 days due to Cyclone Veronica making a late appearance toward our shores. We were open the day before and after, but no Seafarers meant we were very quiet those days too.

We had a good number of tour guests for January, but numbers dropped dramatically in February, before picking up a little in March.

April saw our tour guest numbers starting to increase as caravans had reportedly begun their winter migration to the north west.

We have 3 bus tour companies including us on their travel agenda's again this season. So, we are preparing for another busy tourism season for 2019

Monthly Figures

	Jan	Feb	Mar
LAUNCH	2279	2046	1847
PORT AUTHORITY	153	200	101
CREW TXFR	4	1	1
TOTAL SEAFARERS	2436	2247	1949
DAILY AVERAGE NO. OF SEAFARERS	79	80	63
SHIP & PASTORAL VISITS BY CHAPLAIN	15	29	27
SHOPPING CENTRE BUS	2253	2097	1792
HARBOUR/FMG TOURS	91	0	57
VISITORS (Not on Tours)	204	22	39

Bar Facelift

In January the bar area was given a fresh new look. All the Seafarers photo's were removed from the walls, laminated in A4 pages and put into folders. Old lights were removed from the ceiling along with an old air conditioner. The walls were patched and tidied. Wooden paneling was used to line the lower half of the walls with the upper half painted in a fresh new blue colour.

Posters were added to the walls, a cupboard was purchased to hold the bain-marie and eating utensils and a table from one of the offices was repurposed for a tour coffee station. Enquiries have been made regarding new tables and chairs to finish the look.

All the computers in the bar area were removed allowing for small tables along the wall, making the whole area feels much larger.

Four of the computers have been mounted on the wall and



we are currently scanning all the Seafarers photos and putting together power point slide shows to redisplay the photos that used to adorn the walls.

So there will be an electronic version as well as the originals in folders to browse through.

Thanks must go to the staff members who put in the extra time to freshen up the bar area. Looks great!



Seafarers photo montage—the photo looks greener with our new down lighting.

Helen's Farewell

In early April we had an afternoon tea to farewell Helen. Staff members, our Committee Director and his wife were on hand to celebrate Helen's time and work at the Centre.

Chris and Helen moved here in November 2016 from Brisbane. They had thought they were retired, till Chris saw our ad for a new Operations Manager. He applied and as they say, 'the rest is history'. They have served the Centre in many areas, which is normal for many of us, as we tend to wear a collection of hats rather than just one. Helen took on the role of purchasing and accounts assistant.

With her health declining she handed over the purchasing to Vicky, who then took on a more active role in the ordering of stock, and her accounting duties finally were passed to Vimbai and Genalyn.

Helen is now living in Geraldton,



where she is getting used to her new surrounds as she waits for Chris to join her.

A new Operations Manager will soon be in place freeing Chris up to allow he and Helen some quality time together.

A parting gift for the couple was handed to Helen at the afternoon tea and she said it would hang proudly in their new home. Thanks to those who put this together.

We pray with you both for Helen's healing, but always that God's will be done and that He will sustain you through the battles ahead.

Thank you, and God bless!



Prayer Points:

Join us as we pray for..

- ⇒ ...Errol. He is a Filipino Seafarer, and he was recently diagnosed with Leukemia. He was transferred from Port Hedland to Perth for treatment, and is expected to be there for some time. Pray for his family who are anxious for him and waiting for him to come home.
- ⇒ ...our new Operations Manager John, and for a productive handover period with Chris.
- ⇒ ...Chris and Helen as they settle into retirement in Geraldton
- ⇒ ...Ron and Narelle as they journey over from NSW to help out as staff go on annual leave in late June
- ⇒ ...a new home for the Port Hedland Seafarers Centre. The current Centre is on Port Authority land, we have extended our lease on the land, but need a new home within 3 years. Pray for the right building or land that we can use. We also pray for funding to assist us with this huge task.
- ⇒ ...all Seafarers as they are away from home for so many months. Pray for their safety, that things go well for them onboard and that they may have opportunity to come ashore for a short break while in Port Hedland. Pray for their families too.
- ⇒ ...our staff. Pray for a renewed spirit of team as we work together to serve God, by service and caring for the Seafarers, our tour guests and each other

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Tours