

first vessel, the Ensign, sailed in 1886 and was soon followed by others. In 1896 Queen Victoria bestowed royal patronage – The Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. In 1911 a number of vessels were developed to become floating hospitals, places of worship, tobacco shops, clothing stores, libraries, club rooms, hotels and recreation areas. From 1930 land-based hostels were founded – the first being the Queen Mary's Hostel in Grimsby. In 2006 the name of the charity was changed to The Fishermen's Mission.

They support active and former fishermen, sea-going staff working in the UK aquaculture industry, and migrant fishermen working on UK vessels. Their team provide a 24-hour emergency response to any fishing vessel working in UK waters, assisting with injury, or loss at sea.

The charity's work is based in the roots of our Christian faith, accepting all without judgement. They take the compassion of Christ to fishing communities, purposefully reaching out to fishermen and their families, providing practical and emotional support with every step and milestone. They will help with a fisherman's funeral and regularly undertake blessings of boats and fleets. They hold a weekly Fishermen's Mission prayer time where they pray for fishermen, colleagues and so much more. Fishing vessels often have a Fishermen's Mission New Testament on board.

To make a donation, go to www.fishermansmission.org

***Thank you for taking the time to reading these notes.
Please consider making a donation to support one (or
both, perhaps?) of these charities in their work.
It will be much appreciated.***

FOR THOSE IN PERIL ON THE SEA.

SEAFARERS

What is a seafarer? You can define a seafarer as literally being someone who is employed to serve aboard any type of marine vessel. This usually refers to active seafaring workers but can be used to describe a person with a long history of serving within the profession.

This may sound like a simple definition, but delving further into the profession will reveal a plethora of service types and roles that individual seafarers can play in their line of work.

The work that seafarers do is often under-appreciated by the majority, and their working conditions vary. There are somewhere in the region of 1.89 million international seafarers worldwide.

Those of us who have been on cruise ships will have an appreciation of how many seafarers it takes to run a cruise ship – many, if not most, of the crew coming from the world's poorer economies.

Then there are the ships transporting goods and fuels around our world. Essential movements in the operation of our global economy.

In total, more than 90% of the world's goods and fuels are transported around the world, thanks to seafarers. Without them the world economy would grind to a halt. This would place businesses and millions of jobs around the world in jeopardy.

This is why seafarers are so important in helping to maintain our current way of life and considered by many to be an under-appreciated key worker.

Life on board ship is tough and often dangerous for seafarers who very often have to endure extreme weather conditions, particularly during the cold winter months. Living conditions have improved over the years, but still cabins are functional rather than spacious and vary in quality and

comfort. Seafarers face long working hours, long contracts and whilst they are entitled to their own nationality food, sometimes this is not catered for. Alongside a tough environment, seafarers will sometimes also face notable dangers. These can occur for various reasons including piracy at sea in key places around the world.

The life of seafarers can be far from idyllic, with many international seafarers regularly completing long term voyages which leave them isolated from friends, family and loved ones for up to nine months at a time. For others it is a career of choice which enables them to provide a better life for their families at home and is worth the sacrifice of time away from them.

Unsurprisingly, communication back home can be problematic for many seafarers owing to varying degrees of access to Wi-Fi on ships or in port. Many seafarers choose to only sail on those ships which provide access to Wi-Fi on board.

However, extended periods away from home can put a strain on relationships with loved ones as well as on mental health.

FISHERMEN

A particular type of seafarer is the fisherman. Not the Sunday afternoon leisure sort but those who spend their working lives out on the sea catching fish for our tables – which come to us, perhaps, via the fish and chip shop!

Like the seafarers described above they very often find themselves working in tough and dangerous conditions. We may picture in our minds the small inshore fishing boat bobbing about on a sunny morning a mile or two out from Newlyn or Padstow. However most commercial fishing boats are way out on the ocean, in all kinds of weather; often facing storm and tempest to find us cod, haddock, etc. And they are not just out there

for a few hours – it can be days/weeks – day and night seeking the shoals of fish to supply the needs of our tables.

MISSION TO SEAFARERS

Originally founded in 1836 by John Ashley of Clifton (Bristol) who set up the Bristol Channel Mission. Using a boat – the Eirene- to provide Christian ministry and support to merchant seamen around the port of Bristol and other places on the Bristol Channel. In 1856 this mission joined up with others to form the Anglican Mission to Seamen. In 2000 the name changed to Mission to Seafarers.

Today this Christian charity has a presence in over 200 ports across the world in 50 different countries. A global network of chaplains, staff, volunteers providing practical, emotional and spiritual support through ship visits, drop-in centres and a range of welfare and emergency services



To make a donation, go to www.missiontoseafarers.org

THE FISHERMAN'S MISSION

A floating mission was founded on the River Thames in 1844 – called the Thames Church Mission. In 1881 the leading pastor – Ebenezer Mather was shocked by the loss of 189 fishermen at Eyemouth on the Scottish borders. In response he set up the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen to provide Christian ministry and welfare support to fishermen and their families. The organisation motto “Preach the Word; heal the sick.” Their

