



Website.  
[www.saiss.co.za](http://www.saiss.co.za)  
 e mail  
[office@saiss.co.za](mailto:office@saiss.co.za)  
 Tel.  
 27 31 2660695

**Greetings from Durban!**

**SAILORS' SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

**MARCH 2016**

Dear friends

To those who have not yet received friendly Sailors' Society 2016 greetings, we send good wishes for this year, may you enjoy the important things in life – good health, happiness, love and prosperity. May you also feel the presence and love of the Lord at all times.

Although Christmas is but a memory we would like to share with you a project which has been in operation for many years and never fails to encourage seafarers far away from home.

*"Good Day and a merry Christmas and a happy new year to all of you.*

*On behalf of my crew and myself, I want to express my thanks and gratitude for the Christmas presents and especially the letters given to us.*

*I was personally touched by the letter and drawings given to me by a small girl named Eryn. Should you know who she is, please give her my heartfelt thanks and wish her a happy Christmas and a very good New Year."*

*On behalf of the entire crew of M.T. Ras Maersk*

*Yours Sincerely, Tony Kaae Kromann, Master. "*

**SHARE YOUR CHRISTMAS WITH A SEAFARER**

1200 gifts were packed by enthusiastic helpers in record time with gifts having been distributed to seafarers in the outer anchorage, the port and control tower from 23 to 25 December. This project has been running for many years and although it entails a lot of hard work, seafarers who cannot be home during this festive period appreciate the gesture. In addition, schools were also contacted and the teachers were requested to ask learners to write a short note which were placed in the parcels. **Mrs Glenda Duval**, the manager of the Seafarers' Centre sent us this very touching message [left] which she received from the Master of the vessel, MT. RAS MAERSK

*Thanks!*

*The Sailors' Society would like to thank the many dedicated people who once again helped make the **Share your Christmas with a Seafarer** project such a resounding success.*

What a few words from a small child named Eryn, can mean to a man, far from home and loved ones, at Christmas time. Thank you to all our letter writers and their teachers. ⚓

**SAILORS' SOCIETY DEDICATION SERVICE**



This annual service was held at the Glenwood Presbyterian Church on 24 January. It was once again joyous and well attended with music by members of the S.A. Army Band and the Glenwood Presbyterian Choir.

Rev. Boet van Schalkwyk led the worship with prayer and he and his wife, Linda [left] did scripture readings. Rev David Schooling, a retired chaplain undertook the preaching of the sermon.

At this service Mr Barry Haley, Chairman of the Sailors' Society presented Rev Ron Burgess with his honorary life membership medal. Recently retired from the Board of Directors of the Sailors' Society, Ron is well-known in the ecumenical fraternity and has been active in the Sailors' Society since 1989.



L-r Rev Burgess, his wife Avril and Rev Schooling

*"I did not meet the seafarers on the vessel but had the opportunity to talk to about 20 of the 400 crew from 60 different countries. In the meeting I did a presentation about Sailors' Society and the work I do at the port as the Chaplain. Being Christians, they were amazed to learn that there is work done by Christians for seafarers. I bought some useful Christian literature which will contribute to the knowledge for my work.*

*I also visited the vessel ARRIETA and met Capt Andilbeal Sapaco, who was preparing to fly to the Philippines the next day. Although busy, he spent some good time talking to me and said "I am very happy to meet you; I have been here in Maputo for a few days, today being my last day in this port. God sent his servant to come and meet me. Could you please pray for me, tomorrow I am flying to my country because my first born daughter is graduating at school. May the Lord bless this special event. We prayed and he was grateful to the Sailors' Society. I then met other crew members."*

*From 9 – 11 March the Methodist Church of Southern Africa had the Mission Consultation in Johannesburg. With about 70 delegates from South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho and Mozambique attending I did a presentation on the Sailors' Society Port Mission in Maputo. The participants were amazed to hear the stories of our work in Mozambique.*

*The confessed that it was the first time they heard about this very important mission for seafarers. Participants were unanimous on saying this is a very important and wonderful mission that our brothers and sisters are doing in Mozambique. The Methodist Church of Southern Africa must encourage and replicate to other parts of the Connexion.*

## Training

There will be a much focus on training leading on from the establishment of the Crisis Response Centre which was launched last July and which we reported on.

It is sad to report that the scourge of maritime attacks is not diminishing which of course means that there are an increasing number of seafarers who require trauma counselling. This means more training to increase skills as well as to endeavour to train more chaplains.

Following discussions and meetings with the TIR [Trauma Incident Reduction] executive in Cape Town, Chaplain Stephen van

To illustrate the need for the training, here is an update on maritime **crime attacks in January and February 2016** which in its entirety reveal in the region of 20 attacks in the Gulf of Guinea. Space does not permit the entire list, but several examples are quoted to indicate the variety of attacks:

## NEWS FROM THE PORTS

### Mozambique

One of our chaplains in Maputo Azarias Muchanga [right] tells us about a visit to the floating bookshop, the Logos Hope, the vessel the ARRIETA and an account of a mission consultation he attended.



It is always so heartening to hear such stories where our chaplains have personal contact with seafarers and are received so warmly.

### VISITS AROUND PORTS

**Mozambique:** Our Port Chaplains in the ports of Nacala and Maputo are fully operational and serving enthusiastically. Rev Van Schalkwyk will visit these ports in April.

**Ghana:** A visit to Ghana is scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016. A further trip to Ghana is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> September during which the chaplains and ports of Tema and Takoradi will be visited.

**Port Elizabeth:** Rev Van Schalkwyk met with Chaplain Danie Taljard [right]. All is going well in PE and Danie is also doing good work in the Port of Coega. He is making contact with both the master and crews of vessels followed up by e mail .Personal contact is vital. On return visits they make contact with Danie should they require assistance. It makes such a difference when there is a familiar face! Sailors' Society is planning to request the ITF to fund a computer shop and telephone kiosk.



## THE YEAR AHEAD

2015 was a full one for the Sailors' Society but 2016 promises to be even busier.

Schalkwyk and the CEO Rev Boet van Schalkwyk were invited to undergo advanced training to qualify as TIR Trainers over the next two years. [Train the Trainers]. This will qualify them to further train our chaplains for crisis response to seafarers suffering from disaster and piracy hijacking stress at greatly reduced costs to the Society. Training begins in June.

The US-UK is sponsoring a Chaplains' Conference in Cape Town from 8 – 11 June 2016 which will be attended by all Sailors' Society chaplains in the Region.

January 13. Fishermen kidnapped at Dodo River, Nigeria.

January 15. Sixteen passengers and two crew members kidnapped from passenger boat in Bayelsa waterways, Nigeria.

January 25. Passenger boat attacked in Rivers State waterways, Nigeria. One passenger killed, three injured.

The Nigerian waterways of the Bayelsa and Rivers states have been a theatre for frequent attacks to passenger boats in recent months. During the month of January, 30 people were kidnapped in two incidents that occurred on January 15 and January 18. Last month, a number of passengers were kidnapped or killed in several incidents that occurred on December 7, December 11, December 12, December 21, and December 26. An article from a Nigerian newspaper sheds some light on the current situation in this town on the Gulf of Guinea, recounting a story of bribery, corruption and collusion, where local gangs feel free to conduct criminal activities unpunished.

February 5. Container ship **SAFMARINE KURAMO** hijacked off Nigeria. Released on February 6.  
The CRC [Crisis Response Centre] will follow up on the SA crew members

February 11. Ship MT MAXIMUS boarded by pirates off Ivory Coast.

The Sailors' Society is liaising with MPHRP, ISWAN, Seafarers Welfare Board [Nigeria] in providing training for responders in Nigeria to counsel and care for hijacked and imprisoned seafarers in the deteriorating situation in that country. ⚓



## First Responders

Another group of rescue personnel who may be traumatised by tragic events at sea are the 'first responders' i.e. rescue personnel who often have to deal with loss of life at sea and other stressful situations. Just because they are trained does not mean they are immune to stress and trauma.

Rev. Van Shalkwyk has compiled guidelines for these situations where our Crisis Response Centre may also help.

### Stress at Sea - A Message for Seafarers from our Chaplains.

From time to time our duties at sea call on us to help others in crisis and you may have witnessed or participated in call outs that left you feeling stressed / traumatised.

May we come alongside to say that after a stressful / traumatic incident you may go through a wide range of normal emotional feelings and reactions. The Crisis Response Centre and responders generally agree "It is best to be helped by a counsellor, facilitator or responder such as a Doctor, Crisis Responder or Chaplain as soon as possible."

Should none of these be available, the message also contains information on some common reactions which include a list of Emotional and Physical Reactions to trauma along with a helpful coping strategies. It is important to realise these are **NORMAL REACTIONS TO ABNORMAL EVENTS**.

Ask to be helped by a counsellor, facilitator or responder as soon as possible!

Make contact with our Crisis Response Center on +27 833018022

**If anyone wishes to have more detailed information on this topic, kindly contact the Sailors' Society's office.**

The above is not such good news to read about in the first quarter of the year, but unfortunately tragic news is constantly with us. However so many are working hard to alleviate suffering in all situations. We think especially of our chaplains and their work in trying conditions. However there ARE the 'good news' stories they tell, which appear at the beginning of the newsletter.

When Rev Van Schalkwyk returns from his travels, he will share with us his findings and information from the distant ports. In the meantime let us all remember all who render assistance in our prayers.

***We have celebrated Easter - so let us remember the HOPE and RENEWAL it brings as we celebrate the risen Christ.***

***Richest blessings to you all till next time.***

[The pictures on page one are Durban scenes, yachting off Durban, The control tower at the harbour entrance, the Millennium Tower and the steam tug, the J R More on display at the Maritime Museum.]

