



# Flying Angel

Caring for seafarers around the world



SPRING 2021

Dear Friends,

The **Mission To Seafarers Halifax** provides care and support for seafarers aboard ships visiting from all over the world, regardless of race, gender, culture, or religious affiliation. Day-to-day, here in Halifax, our ministry provides much-needed free WiFi communications, warm clothing and a place of safe respite. Our chaplain, staff, and volunteers offer hospitality, pastoral care, on-going support, and advocacy especially in cases of human rights issues, such as unpaid wages or poor working and living conditions.

While Covid 19 dominated the Mission's work, 2020 was a memorable year and we hosted 1035 seafarers. For some of these seafarers it was the first opportunity for them to walk on land in 14 months. Mission staff and volunteers became personal shoppers as seafarers are not allowed to leave their ships and shop. Sadly, the lives of seafarers continue to be affected by tragedies at home and several bereavement support interventions were offered. While ship visits are different,

we visited 337 ships in 2020 and delivered 1095 shoeboxes to 50 vessels in December.

This work is done largely on a volunteer basis, but costs remain, as do the needs of seafarers. Due to COVID-19, in-person fundraising events have ceased, and our donation income has been reduced significantly - and yet the need for these services of care and support has never been greater.

We are enormously grateful to those community partners who have supported our pandemic appeal as well as the many sponsorship dollars donated despite cancelled fund-raising events. We are truly blessed! We are appealing to you to continue to support us through 2021. This is crucial to help us meet the needs of seafarers - essential workers – forgotten heroes. Hope, love and light to our seafarers. Please DONATE!

Kindest regards,  
Helen Glenn, Mission Manager

## SHOEBOX CAMPAIGN

We extend our appreciation to the North American Maritime Ministry Association, <http://namma.org/> responsible for providing a grant through the [International Christian Maritime Association](#) with funding from the [ITF Seafarers' Trust](#) to enable the continuation of our Shoebox Campaign during a global Pandemic. Fewer donor dollars and less shoeboxes were received during these extraordinary times. We were pleased to include letters from the ITF expressing gratitude and recognising seafarers' extraordinary work at sea.

Covid-19 has created huge challenges for people around the globe, but seafarers have the added burden of border restrictions and the impact on repatriation and crew changes, not to mention the stress of distance from family and friends, issues which vastly affect mental health.



Crew of ALS APOLLO receive shoebox gifts

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## DELIVERIES DURING GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Community partners, individual donors, the Mother's Union of the Anglican Church of Canada, International Sailor's Society of Canada, and many more play an integral role in our ability to deliver these gifts. We thank everyone for the heartfelt prayers, wishes, donations and kind support.



Volunteer Howard Gray visits E M KEA crew with gifts



Maersk Palermo crew visit Mission



Volunteer Palma Heming delivers gifts to MOL Maestro



APL GWANGYANG



Donald M James crew in remote West Nfld receive Shoe box gifts delivered by tug, hoisted on board! Thanks to Captain Jim MacKelvie

## Please Donate

Website: [www.missiontoseafarershalifax.ca](http://www.missiontoseafarershalifax.ca)

Mail: Mission to Seafarers Halifax

P. O. Box 27114, NS B3H 4M8

Drop in: 844 Marginal Road.

**Many dedicated volunteers assisted in assembling shoeboxes during their regular shifts.** Aurora Ulloa-Parson was instrumental in shopping for shortages. She also attended the Mission in evenings and weekends with a special guest volunteer – husband Halifax Pilot Captain James Parsons! James showed an uncanny ability to wrap gifts with precision and grace with the haste of a Christmas ELF!! Aurora and James are long time donors to our Mission. Whether replacing toilets, building decks or donating funds – they have both been here for many projects. Sandy Collins and Lynell Withers knitted beautiful wool scarves, toques and mittens to keep our seafarers warm. Our partners at Fishermen's Friends, Ontario donated samples again this year packed in every shoebox delivered. We are grateful for their contribution and We've been told

personally how much our seafarers appreciate the shoeboxes we deliver. Often – the only gift received at Christmas.



Shoebbox ladies Donna, Sylvia, Judy, Ilonka and Emma



Captain James Parsons, Wrapper Extraordinaire

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Judy, Ilonka, Patrica and Colm shoebox team players



Constable Jenn, Sargent Nancy and Volunteer Colm Stockdale in wrapping mode

Pictured left our Halifax Port Police officers not only provided many quality gifts to our Mission, they volunteered to fill shoebox gifts with love. Sargent Nancy and Constable Jenn dropped in numerous times to pack and wrap many gifts. Amazing! We are thankful for the ongoing support from our Port Police team on many levels. Blessings in abundance to you both!

90% of everything the we use is transported around our planet on board ships. But ships do not operate without people: Seafarers-men and women from around the world risk their lives to keep the supply chain open, ensuring that everything we need and use daily arrives in our country safely, economically, and as ecologically sound as possible. I was mesmerized by the poem created jam packed with information: <https://youtu.be/rTgvv7iE4OQ>.

In Canada, there is now a national coordinated response to ensure the welfare of seafarers. And yet the challenges they face have been largely under the radar. You may have seen articles in the news indicating limited shore leave if any, and pandemic travel restrictions that put seafarers physical and mental health in jeopardy in the course of their vital work. Corporation CEOs, the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations, and organizations such as ours are urging governments to take action. The UN has declared Seafarers to be “key workers”.

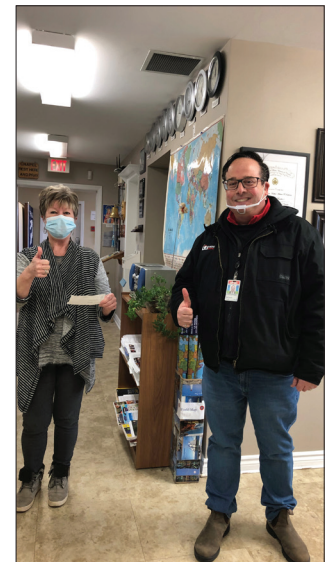
## CHRISTMAS VISITORS BEARING GIFTS



P & H Milling Group, Ken Lawrence (centre) presents care packages in honour of all retirees! Brilliant!



Bob Betts, Protos Shipping donates Christmas sponsorship and funds to pandemic appeal!



Patrick Bohan donates sponsorship for Christmas NO EVENT!



Norman Picton and Howard Gray continue renos on our Mission. Seen here refurbishing the dart board wall. No labour costs and supplies purchased inexpensively. Great job – well done! Thank YOU.

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**The Halifax Pilots** are not only responsible for guiding ships into Halifax Harbour - these mariners dedicate their lives to the economic well being of our Port. They continue to be instrumental to not only the success of the shipping industry in Halifax they are keen community partners to our Mission mandate. These brave men share news of our ministry to Masters and crew and often call direct to the Mission to share the needs of incoming crew members. They are also substantial donors for our annual events – even when the events are cancelled!

In order to provide pilotage service to the shipping industry, the APA employs professional pilots who must have a thorough knowledge of the local pilotage area, including port infrastructure, prevailing weather and wind conditions, and sub-surface characteristics of the port. Their knowledge must include the handling

characteristics of each type of vessel calling on their port so that they will be able to accurately judge the effect of wind, current, and tidal influences on the ship they are piloting. In addition to the knowledge required, pilots must remain in good physical condition so they can safely transfer between a ship and a pilot boat in adverse sea states and weather conditions.

Pilots judge an approach correctly, anticipate accurately and react effectively. The professional abilities of pilots are integrated with navigational systems, both visual and electronic, and the support of information services. Such resources provide a safe and efficient service to vessels plying the waters of the Atlantic region.

We are grateful for their expertise and for their continued support to our Mission.

## CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON TAKE OUT WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS

The global pandemic impacted fund-raising substantially with cancellation of all our events. Our option for take out luncheons has been well received by our awesome community partners and donors. The October lasagna dinner was a sell out. As well, the November turkey luncheon was a real hit with over 151 meals prepared. Executive Chef, Trevor Simms assisted in the preparation of turkey dinner with all the trimmings with Norman & Susan Picton, Sandra & John Attersley, James Kennedy, Aurora Parsons, Palma Heming, Nancy Eisener, Carolyn Graham and Joseph Loot. We are truly blessed.

The backbone of our Mission, we salute our volunteers for their sincerity and depth of engagement particularly during a pandemic. Working with a keen skeleton crew of “watchkeepers” and “ship visitors” under strict protocols, we became our own “bubble” as we ensured our ministry was presented to visiting seafarers. To those volunteers who are currently on hiatus your prayers, donations, emails, phone calls, and words of support have been truly inspiration to those volunteering. This photo simply must be shared from volunteer **Glenn Taylor**.



James, Norman, Nancy, Joseph, Susan, Palma, Aurora, Sandra and John



Norman, James and Susan

*“Our Elf on the Shelf has been watching you and wants you to know that he’s been reporting to Santa what a good job you’re doing down there at the Mission. So - rest assured you and all the elves working with you are on Santa’s good list” Stay healthy... stay safe and Merry Christmas!*



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## VOLUNTEER PROFILE

# CAPTAIN COLM STOCKDALE



Colm's career started as a sailor at just 16, working on Coasters plying trade around Ireland and the UK as a deck-boy during the summer. Having graduated from High School during an economic slump, the only choices appeared to be the priesthood or that of a sailor. Colm joined the Irish Shipping Ltd. As Deck Cadet. *"My first time experiencing very cold weather and seeing snow, hard for you hardy Canadians to relate but when you do not have the gear, clothing and shoes it can be traumatic. We wore every stitch of clothing we had, mostly sweaters, two pair pants & socks to keep warm. Winter shoes were another problem. I remember first trippers and cadets taking turns to sit on the hot galley stove to warm up when we came in off the deck."*

*"In the Port of New York a stevedore saw my distressed state of clothing and took pity on me. He took me to an Army and Navy store to kit me out at his expense. As a cadet I was making \$10 a month. With my newly acquired Parka, lined pants and winter boots I was ready for the snow. I am glad the Mission keeps a supply of clothing for our visiting seafarers, I know they appreciate it. Receiving Shoe-boxes during Christmas was also a delight and I was a recipient during my career while visiting Halifax, New York and Port Arthur, Texas."*

*"How did I end up in Canada? I met a nurse, fell in love, got married and she came to Ireland. When I graduated, as a Cadet I joined the Athel Line a molasses and oil tanker company. They permitted my wife to tag along. What a nice way to see the world with a nice companion."*

Captain Colm Stockdale has been an active ship visiting volunteer since 2002. He has been instrumental training us in standard first aid and CPR as a Saint John's Ambulance instructor. While working as a Coast Guard Senior Search & Rescue Coordinator at the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Halifax Colm decided to join the Mission to fulfill the wish to contribute to the nautical community. He sensed this would be an excellent fit with his background and experience. We are certainly pleased to have Colm within our volunteer family with his years of experience within the shipping industry. What an interesting life he has lead. Colm shares with us some of his experiences over the high seas.

At 26 years of age, Colm applied for Immigrant status. *"Being married to a Canadian and having employment I had no problem and joined Imperial Oil as 2/0"*.

While on leave Colm met a Captain McMullin. *"I was in the right place at the right time. The Coast Guard was looking for mates, that started my career in the CG which lasted 33 years. Colm spent 18 years as a teacher at the Transport Canada Training Institute Cornwall, Ontario and the Coast Guard College, Sydney. His last post was to Halifax Joint Rescue Coordination Centre before retiring 2006."*

Rather than sit idly at home Colm sailed vessels as Skipper to Bermuda, Caribbean and Victoria, BC.

*"In 2008 while volunteering at the Mission, the 3rd mate on the Dutch Runner, trading back and forth to St. Pierre and Micqueleon, told me he couldn't get relief. Again I was in the right place at the right time, and ended up as Chief Mate and lasted 2 ½ years until the ship's chartering company went bankrupt in Newfoundland. Maybe it was time for me to really retire and spend more time volunteering at the Mission and other organizations?"*

## Chair's Message

As we leave the holiday season and 2020 behind, we enter 2021 with a gratefulness that 2020 is finally over and hope that 2021 will be much improved. Here in Nova Scotia we continue to be thankful that we are relatively untouched by COVID, but the number of recent infections reported in New Brunswick shows the

virus is never far away. This serves as a reminder that we have to continue with the preventative measures including distancing and masking in a bid to keep things under control. However, as I write this message reports suggest infection rates across the globe are coming down and vaccines are beginning to be rolled out and that has to be taken as positive news.

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Unfortunately, the issue of stranded seafarers continues and a quick glance at the news page of the Mission to Seafarers Headquarters website ([www.missiontoseafarers.org](http://www.missiontoseafarers.org)) shows this looks likely to carry on for some time. However, hope appears to be taking hold in the form of The Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change. This declaration is an alliance of leading organisations from across the shipping industry, including the ICS, ITF and Global Maritime Forum, calling for progress in recognizing seafarers as key workers and giving them priority access to COVID-19 vaccines, establishing gold standard health protocols, increasing collaboration between operators and charters to facilitate crew changes and ensuring air connectivity between key maritime hubs for seafarers.

Closer to home the consequences of new and changing rules and regulations and the confusion

that sows amongst all parties as a result became clear. Unfortunately, during severe weather at sea, one seafarer was killed and several others injured on board a ship that ultimately ended up docked in Halifax. Delays meant the understandably traumatised crew were unable to immediately leave the vessel. Fortunately, the Mission was able to visit on board during the delays and provide some form of respite to the crew.

Helen, Joseph and all our volunteers continue to work hard and adapt to continuously changing regulations to provide much needed to support to all those seafarers calling at Halifax. For this we must be very grateful and I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to them for their efforts in these challenging conditions.

Yours sincerely  
Alastair Gray. Chair

## TRIP TO ALGERIA IN HALIFAX HARBOUR – Palma Heming

Volunteering at the Halifax Mission to Seafarers has many advantages indeed - we get to work with a wonderful group of volunteers and meet very interesting seafarers from all over the world. Just recently, the Algerian registered IMEDGHASSEN was moored at our docks for over a month for repairs. Fortunately, our Mission is close enough so the crew could walk over for a visit and a break from the ship's daily routine. We were also able to fulfill some of their supply requests and we hope, in a small way, made their stay more enjoyable. In return, Captain Kamel invited us to join him on board his ship for lunch. Colm Stockdale and myself were fortunate to be able to accept his invitation, along with agent Bob Betts, Protos Shipping, and enjoyed a traditional Algerian meal. His cook staff prepared a dish which is the main staple in Algeria - a lovely couscous, topped with strips of carrots, zucchini and turnip in a star formation and finished off with a chicken drumstick centred on top. To this we were to add a couple of small spoonfuls of vegetable stock (presented in a large bowl on the table) followed by a small drizzle of olive oil. It was delicious, to say the least. I noticed on the table a litre of buttermilk. The Captain drank a glass of this like milk, as in Algeria, but I just tasted a small portion – it was actually quite nice with the couscous. This was followed by a very moist square of cake flanked by two pastries stacked in a pyramid fashion - a small spoon balanced on top. After having enjoyed this ample meal we were treated with a glass of sweetened green tea with mint leaves. Throughout this wonderful

cultural experience we were treated to a discussion of some typical Algerian customs and the future plans for the ship and crew. The ship is now scheduled to depart Halifax mid-March due to on-going mechanical issues. Destined for the Mediterranean – should take them about 2 weeks as they plan to sail through the southern latitudes. We would like to thank Captain Kamel Benrabah, Master of M/V IMEDGHASSEN, for his hospitality. We wish him and his crew all the best of health and safe travels. Unfortunately, this vessel which requires further repairs was recently moved to Pier 9C. We will continue to visit our friends until they are able depart to home in Algeria. Blessings in abundance to them all.



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## Giulia 1

The MV Giulia I, owned by VSL Dry Bulk Limited (Malta), departed Norfolk, Virginia on January 26 heading for Tunisia. The ship met with a nasty storm on the Atlantic. The master reported that the ship had been hit by a large wave approximately 320 nautical miles southeast of Nova Scotia, Canada. The vessel diverted to Halifax, Pier 25 midnight February 1st due to 3 injured crew and one death.



Deacon Art gave a general prayer for all the crew members, prayed over each crew member individually, and blessed with Holy water the bridge, Master's cabin, and engine room.

The Mission Manager was contacted by agent F. K. Warren. At 0100Hrs, Deacon Art Mitchell attended the vessel with Joseph Loot. The Deacon said prayers and blessed the body of the deceased (30 year-old and newly-wed AB) in the ship's infirmary, his cabin, and the spot on the ship's bow where the tragedy happened. The Captain and crew were visibly shaken. I met with the Captain and 5 crew members at 10:00 AM with Sim and Top Up cards and an abundance of Tim Horton donuts. Crew were invited to the Mission as soon as possible. Shore leave approval was confirmed by Transport Canada at that time and a copy of the latest bulletin was provided. Everyone was busy working with Transport Canada, Port State Control compliance and the RCMP were involved due to circumstances. Volunteer Nancy Eisener delivered toques, warm socks, mittens and blankets that morning with Joseph Loot and John Attersley visiting late afternoon.

Through the Mission to Seafarers, a mass was held for the crew members onboard Giulia I on February 4th. Father Rob Elford officiated the mass along with Deacon Art with Joseph Loot. The crew, their religious items, and the ship (from the bridge, cabins, engine room) were blessed with Holy water. During the mass, a crew and the captain participated as Reader and Eucharistic Minister, respectively. It was a well-celebrated religious service and the officers and crew deeply appreciated the Mission's care and support at this time of their need.

Alas, after days of resolving the issues preventing the seafarers from enjoying their lawful right to shore leave, four crew members from the Giulia 1 rested over some Buds and pool shots for about three

hours Friday night, February 5th hosted by Joseph Loot. Shortly thereafter the vessel moved to Pier 9. We continue to offer chaplaincy, warm comforts of friendship to the Captain and brave crew as they recuperate – on some level – from this harrowing adventure at sea, and the loss of a very young and dear comrade. We thank the Volunteer Philippine Consulate and members of the Fil-Cad community for their visitations and gifts of authentic Filipino treats & supplies.



On February 15th, Joseph Loot attended to the Giulia 1 as Deacon Art Mitchell gave a general blessing, to each crew member, the Captain, and the ship's bridge, Master's cabin and engine room before the Giulia 1 returned to her journey to Tunisia on February 16th. The crew expressed their appreciation to the Mission to Seafarers Halifax for the services and hospitality extended to them. The crew leaves behind the remains of the deceased seafarer (Jake) for repatriation upon completion of required documentation. We wish them fair winds and following seas. Blessings in abundance to all.

The Mission to Seafarers work worldwide in support of seafarers who have been mistreated or abandoned. Please keep the seafarers in your prayers.

## Please Donate

Website: [www.missiontoseafarershalifax.ca](http://www.missiontoseafarershalifax.ca)

Mail: Mission to Seafarers Halifax  
P. O. Box 27114, NS B3H 4M8

Drop in: 844 Marginal Road.

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## Announcements

**CN** awards the Mission to Seafarers Halifax a \$15,000 COVID-19 relief gift. Our volunteers, staff and board members are overwhelmed with gratitude for the generosity and continued support during these extraordinary times. Seafarers will reap the benefits of this gift which is critical for us to continue our ministry of chaplaincy, advocacy and the warmth of caring friendship within our “home away from home”. We improve seafarers mental health and well being offering respite and we assist them with their worries.

Ranked 10th on the World’s 100 most sustainable Corporations by Corporate Knights – CN has played a pivotal role as a community supporter in the Port of Halifax. Their 20,000-mile network spans Canada and Mid-America, connecting three coasts: the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Gulf of Mexico. Wherever you find CN trains, you’ll find a host of service options

to help you ship more; faster, further and more cost-effectively. We are eternally grateful.

- We thank Praxes Medical Group for continuing to offer prompt telemedicine support by experienced emergency physicians. The response time is exemplary and crucial when called upon to diagnose issues presented by visiting seafarers with limited timeframes in Port.
- Join our Wednesday, **March 17th** luncheon to celebrate **St. Patrick’s Day**. Reserve your take out orders for **HEARTY IRISH BEEF STEW**, roll and mint brownies. Only \$10 – reserve your orders by March 10th by email to [hglenn@missiontoseafarershalifax.ca](mailto:hglenn@missiontoseafarershalifax.ca) or calling 902-422-7790.
- Join us on May 14 for FISH or Corn CHOWDER, with biscuits and dessert. Please order in advance.

## The Mission is thankful to our sponsors!

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## Mission to Seafarers Halifax

P.O. Box 27114 Halifax, NS B3H 4M8 Canada  
Tel: 902-422-7790 Fax: 902-420-9786  
Website: [www.missiontoseafarershalifax.ca](http://www.missiontoseafarershalifax.ca)  
Location: Opposite Pier 24, Ocean Terminals

We are open 9:30-3:30. Til 7:30 when ships are in Port. Closed Sundays.

**Helen Glenn, Mission Manager**  
Tel: 902-422-7790  
Email: [hglenn@missiontoseafarershalifax.ca](mailto:hglenn@missiontoseafarershalifax.ca)

**Joseph Loot, Assistant Manager**  
Tel: 902-422-7790  
Email: [jagloot@gmail.com](mailto:jagloot@gmail.com)