

JANUARY 2012



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**Inside this issue:**

Christmas Been & Gone	1
Members News	1
Seafarer Statistics	2
Birthday Greetings	2
Chinese New Year	2
Australia Day BBQ	2
Volunteer Update	2

# Stella Maris Melbourne Volunteer Newsletter

## CHRISTMAS BEEN & GONE

Well once again Christmas was upon us and no sooner had it arrived it was over and a new year had started. As always Stella Maris was open over the Christmas holiday break for seafarers wishing to come and make contact with their family and friends back home. I wish to thank those volunteers who helped out over this period. Even though numbers were down on Christmas Day with only 16 seafarers visiting, we were very busy over the next three days with a combined total of 247 seafarers making use of our centre. As per last year each of the seafarers received a gift and a hand made christmas card. The cards were again produced by children from a variety of Catholic schools around Melbourne.

After speaking to many of the seafarers they explained how they enjoyed receiving the cards as it reminded them of their own children back home and of the drawings and paintings that they would create at school and bring home.



**FILIPINO SEAFARERS SHOWING OFF THEIR PRESENTS RECEIVED OVER THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD AS WELL AS THE HAND MADE CHRISTMAS CARDS PRODUCED BY CHILDREN FROM VARIOUS SCHOOLS.**

## MEMBERS NEWS FOR FEBRUARY

- Marie's son, David, will be admitted into the Royal Children's Hospital during February for an operation to relocate his hips. The operation will help to re-align his bones so that they will grow normally allowing David to run, jump, climb and play which we all take for granted. Operation is on the 6th Feb.
- I will be away on holidays for the month of February, spending two weeks in Phuket and then a quick trip to Tassie when I get back to see my family.
- Ann Maree will be away for her tennis championships during the middle of February. We wish her luck in the tournament.
- Flor & Lota will be back home after spending a month in the Philippines catching up with family and friends.

## SEAFARER STATISTICS 2011

Seafarers for December 2011 - 1411

Seafarers for December 2010 - 1523

Year Total for 2011 - 17,670

Year Total for 2010 - 17,900

Total Ships Visited in 2011 - 599

## BIRTHDAYS FOR FEBRUARY

- 4th Kevin Montgomery
- 15th Mary Boland
- 15th Joe Bonnici
- 17th Scott Cook
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Missed your birthday? Let me know.



## CHINESE NEW YEAR

Chinese New Year was celebrated on Monday the 23rd January. Decorations & lanterns were put up the Centre on the previous weekend to help add to the festivity.

A unique range of Chinese food was on offer for any seafarers who visited the Centre on both Sunday and Monday evenings. The food came in a variety of shapes, colours and texture but on whole was enjoyed by everybody, especially the Chinese seafarers, who happened to be in port at the time.



**Chinese crew, after enjoying the festivities at Stella Maris, on Chinese New Year.**

新年快乐 恭喜发财

## AUSTRALIAN DAY BBQ

As with the Australian tradition, a BBQ was held at Stella Maris for seafarers able to attend. A variety of food was on offer, including kangaroo meat and sausages. Pavlova and Anzac biscuits were served for dessert along with a variety of fruit. Everyone joined in with the spirit and a small Australian flag was given to each of the seafarers who attended. A total of 49 seafarers took up our invitation to join. Thanks to staff and volunteers who helped on this day.



**A pleasant day was on hand for those seafarers who were lucky enough to come ashore and join in on our Australian Day BBQ at Stella Maris.**

## VOLUNTEER UPDATE

- We have altered some of the foreign currency that we now accept to change for seafarers. They are Chinese Yuan, Malaysian Ringgit and Thai Baht. Over the last year we have seen a large increase of seafarers wishing to change these currencies. The rates are shown each day on the Exchange Sheet.
- For a trial period we are going to run busses back to the ports on an hourly basis. We are finding that these times seem to suit seafarers better by allowing them more time ashore as well as a speedy return back to their vessel when they are required to start work. It also helps to alleviate pressure on the later busses. The times will be trialed for next month and then reviewed after that.
- We are looking at holding another Responsible Serving of Alcohol course here in the very near future. We have a number of new volunteers and staff who have yet to complete this course. Ann Maree will let you know as soon as we have details.